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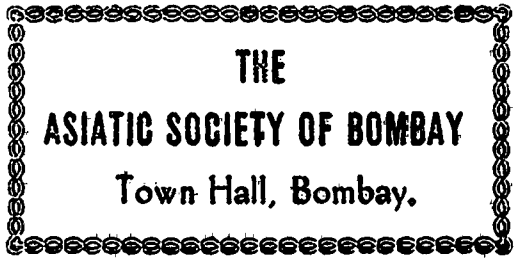

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Mount Vernon in Virginia, the Seat of the late Gen.l Washington.

Published May 18th 1801 by Richard Phillips, 41 St. Paul's Church Yard.

THE LIFE

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON,

COMMANDER IN CHIEF

OF THE

AMERICAN FORCES,

DURING THE WAR WHICH ESTABLISHED THE INDEPENDENCE OF HIS COUNTRY,

AND FIRST PRESIDENT

OF

THE UNITED STATES.

COMPILED UNDER THE INSPECTION OF

THE HON. BUSHROD WASHINGTON,

From Original Papers bequeathed to him by his deceased Relative.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

AN INTRODUCTION,

CONTAINING A COMPENDIOUS VIEW OF THE COLONIES PLANTED BY THE ENGLISH ON THE CONTINENT OF NORTH AMERICA.

BY JOHN MARSHALL,

CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE UNITED STATES, &c. &c.

VOL. II.

London:
PRINTED FOR RICHARD PHILLIPS,
No. 71, St. Paul's Church-yard.

1804.

BY J. ADLARD, DUKE-STREET, SMITHFIELD

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CONTENTS.

VOL. II.

CHAPTER I.

Page

BIRTH of Mr. Washington. His Mission to the French on the Ohio. Appointed Lieutenant-colonel of a Regiment of regular Troops. Surprises M. Jumonville. Capitulation of Fort Necessity. Is appointed Aid-de-camp to General Braddock. Defeat and Death of that General. Is appointed to the Command of a Regiment. Extreme Distress of the Frontiers, and Exertions of Colonel Washington to augment the regular Force of the Colony. General Forbes undertakes the Expedition against Fort du Quesne. Defeat of Major Grant. Fort du Quesne evacuated by the French, and taken Possession of by the English. Resignation and Marriage of Colonel Washington - - - - 1

CHAPTER II.

Page

Opinions on the Supremacy of Parliament, and its Right to Tax the Colonies. Stamp Act. Congress assemble at New York. Violence in the Great Towns. Change of Administration. Stamp Act repealed. Opposition to the Mutiny Act. Act Imposing Duties on Tea, &c. resisted in America. The Assembly of Massachussetts address Letters to several Members of the Administration in England. Petition to the King. Circular Letter to the Colonial Assemblies. Letter from the Earl of Hilsborough. Assembly of Massachussetts dissolved. Seizure of the Sloop Liberty. A Convention assembles at Faneuil-hall, Boston. Moderation of its Proceedings. Proceedings of Parliament. Resolutions of the House of Burgesses of Virginia. The Governor dissolves the Assembly. The Members form and sign a Non-importation Agreement. Measures generally taken against the Importation of British Manufactures. General Court again convened in Massachussetts. Its Proceedings. Is prorogued. Administration resolve on a Repeal of all the Duties except that on Tea. Circular Letter of the Earl of Hilsborough. New York recedes in Part from the

Non-

Page

Non-importation Agreement. Riot in Boston. Trial and Acquittal of Captain Preston. Insurrection in North Carolina. Dissatisfaction of Massachussetts. Corresponding Committees appointed. Governor Hutchinson's Correspondence with Administration sent over by Dr. Franklin. The Assembly Petition for the Removal of the Governor and Lieutenant-governor. Hutchinson is succeeded by General Gage - - - - 96

CHAPTER III.

Measures to enforce the Act concerning Duties. Ferment excited in America. The Tea is thrown into the Sea at Boston. Measures of Parliament. General Enthusiasm in America. A general Congress is proposed. General Gage arrives in Boston. Troops stationed on Boston Neck. New Counsellors and Judges. Obliged to resign. Boston Neck fortified. Military Stores seized by General Gage. Preparations for Defence in Massachussetts. King's Speech in Parliament. Proceedings of that Body. Battle of Lexington. Vote of Massachussetts for raising Men. Meeting of Congress. Proceedings of that Body. Battle of Breed's Hill - - 189

CHAPTER IV.

Page

Colonel Washington appointed Commander in Chief of the American Forces. Arrives at Cambridge. Strength and Disposition of the two Armies. Deficiency of the Americans in Arms and Ammunition. Falmouth burned. Success of the American Cruizers. Distress of the British from the Want of fresh Provisions. Difficulty of re-enlisting the Army. Plans for attacking Boston. Possession taken of the Heights of Dorchester. Boston evacuated - - 298

CHAPTER V.

Invasion of Canada meditated. The Americans enter that Province. Siege of Saint John's. Capture of Fort Chamblie. Carleton defeated at Longueisle. Saint John capitulates. Montreal surrenders. Arnold's Expedition by the Way of the Kennebec. He arrives before Quebec; and retires to Point aux Trembles. Montgomery lays seige to Quebec. Unsuccessful Attack on that Place. Death of Montgomery Blockade of Quebec continued. General Thomas takes command of the Army. The Blockade of Quebec is raised. General Sullivan takes the Command. Battle of the Three Rivers. Canada evacuated - - - - 370

CHAP-

CHAPTER VI.

Page

Transactions in Virginia. Action at the Great Bridge. Norfolk evacuated and burned. Transactions of North Carolina. Action at Moore's Creek Bridge. Invasion of South Carolina. British Fleet repulsed at Fort Toultrie. Transactions in New York. Measures leading to Independence. Independence declared - - - - - 441

CHAPTER VII.

Lord and Sir William Howe arrive before New York. Circular Letter of Lord Howe. State of the American Army. The British land in force on Long Island. Battle of Brooklyn. Evacuation of Long Island. Fruitless Negotiations. New York evacuated - - - - - 485

CHAPTER VIII.

Skirmish on the Heights of Haerlem. The Enemy land at Frog's Neck. The American Army evacuates York Island, except Fort Washington. Both Armies move towards the White Plains. The British Army returns to Kingsbridge. General Washington,

Page

Washington, with a Part of his Army, crosses the North River. The Lines of Fort Washington carried by the Enemy, and the Garrison made Prisoners. Evacuation of Fort Lee. Weakness of the American Army. Ineffectual Attempt to raise the Militia. General Washington retreats through Jersey. Capture of General Lee. General Washington crosses the Delaware. Danger of Philadelphia. Battle of Trenton. Of Princeton. Firmness of Congress 547

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LIFE

OF

GENERAL WASHINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

Birth of Mr. Washington—His Mission to the French on the Ohio—Appointed Lieutenant-colonel of a Regiment of regular Troops—Surprises M. Jumonville—Capitulation of Fort Necessity—Is appointed Aid-de-camp to General Braddock—Defeat and Death of that General—Is appointed to the Command of a Regiment—Extreme Distress of the Frontiers, and Exertions of Colonel Washington to augment the regular Force of the Colony—General Forbes undertakes the Expedition against Fort du Quesne—Defeat of Major Grant—Fort du Quesne evacuated by the French and taken Possession of by the English—Resignation and Marriage of Colonel Washington.

GEORGE WASHINGTON, the third son of Augustine Washington, was born in Virginia, at Bridges Creek in the county of Westmorland, on the 22d of February, 1732. He was the great grandson of John Washington, a gentleman of very respectable family in the north of England,

who had emigrated about the year 1657, and settled on the place where young Mr. Washington was born.

Very early in life the cast of his genius disclosed itself. The war in which his country was then engaged against France and Spain, first kindled those latent sparks which afterwards blazed with equal splendour and advantage; and at the age of fifteen he urged so pressingly to be permitted to enter into the British navy, that the place of midshipman was obtained for him. The interference of a timid and affectionate mother suspended for a time the commencement of his military course.

He lost his father at the age of ten years, and received what was denominated an English education; a term which excludes the acquisition of other languages than our own. As his patrimonial estate was by no means considerable, his youth was employed in useful industry: and in the practice of his profession, as a surveyor, he had an opportunity of acquiring that information respecting vacant lands, and of forming those opinions concerning their future value, which afterwards greatly contributed to the increase of his private fortune.

It is strong evidence of the opinion entertained of his capacity, that when not more than nineteen years of age, and at a time when the militia were to be trained for actual service, he was appointed

pointed one of the adjutants-general of Virginia, with the rank of major. The duties annexed to this office were performed by him for a very short time. The plan formed by France for connecting her extensive dominions in America, by uniting Canada with Louisiana, now began to develope itself. Possession was taken of a tract of country then deemed to be within the province of Virginia, and a line of posts was commenced from the Lakes to the Ohio. The attention of Mr. Dinwiddie, the lieutenant-governor of that province, was attracted by these supposed encroachments; and he deemed it his duty to demand, in the name of the king his master, that they should desist from the prosecution of designs which violated, as he thought, the treaties between the two crowns. A proper person was to be selected for the performance of this duty, which, at that time, was very properly believed to be a very arduous one. A great part of the country through which the envoy was to pass was almost entirely unexplored, and inhabited only by Indians, many of whom were hostile to the English, and others of doubtful attachment. While the dangers and fatigues of the journey deterred those from undertaking it who did not extend their views to the future scenes to be exhibited in that country, or who did not wish to be actors in them, they seem to have furnished motives to Mr. Washington for desiring to be employed in this hazardous

service, and he engaged in it with the utmost alacrity.

He commenced his journey from Williamsburg the day on which he was commissioned, and arrived on the 14th of November at Willis's Creek, then the extreme frontier settlement of the English. Guides were there engaged to conduct him over the Aleghany mountains, the paſſage of which, at that season of the year, began to be extremely difficult. After surmounting conſiderable impediments from the snow and high waters, he reached the mouth of Turtle Creek on the Monongahela, on the 22d, where he learned from an Indian trader, that the French general was dead, and that the major part of the army had retired into winter quarters. Purſuing his route, he examined the country with a military eye, and ſelected the forks of the Monongahela and Aleghany rivers, the place where Fort du Quesne, now Fort Pitt, was afterwards erected by the French, as an advantageous and commanding position, which it would be advisable to take poſſession of immediately, and to fortify.

After employing a few days among the Indians in that neighbourhood, and procuring some of their chiefs, whose fidelity he took the most judicious means for securing, to accompany him, he ascended the Aleghany River, and at the mouth of French Creek found the first fort occupied by the troops of France. Proceeding farther up the creek to another

other fort, he was received by Monsieur le Gardeur de St. Pierre, the commanding officer on the Ohio, to whom he delivered the letter of Mr. Dinwiddie: and, having received an answer from him, returned with infinite fatigue, and much danger from the hostile Indians, to Williamsburg. The exertions made by Mr. Washington on this occasion, the perseverance with which he surmounted the difficulties of the journey, and the judgment displayed in his conduct towards the Indians, raised him very much in the public opinion, as well as in that of the lieutenant-governor. His journal, drawn up for the inspection of Mr. Dinwiddie, was published, and generally considered as strongly evincing the solidity of his judgment, and the fortitude of his mind*.

As

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* It will not be unacceptable to the reader to peruse this first report of a young gentleman, who afterwards performed so distinguished a part in the revolution of his country:—it is therefore inserted at large.

I was commissioned and appointed by the Hon. Robert Dinwiddie, Governor, &c. of Virginia, to visit and deliver a letter to the commandant of the French forces on the Ohio, and commenced the intended journey on the same day. The next I arrived at Fredericksburg, and engaged Mr. Jacob Vanbraam to be my French interpreter, and proceeded with him to Alexandria, where we provided necessaries. From thence we went to Winchester, and got baggage, horses, &c. and from thence we pursued the new road to Willis's Creek, where we arrived the 14th of November.

As the answer from the commandant of the French forces on the Ohio indicated no disposition to

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Here I engaged Mr. Gist to pilot us out; and also hired four others as servitors—Barnaby Currin and John M'Quire, Indian traders, Henry Steward and William Jenkins—and in company with those persons left the inhabitants the next day. The excessive rains and vast quantity of snow which had fallen, prevented our reaching Mr. Frazier's, an Indian trader at the mouth of Turtle Creek, on Monongahela River, till Thursday the 22d. We were informed here that expresses had been sent, a few days before, to the traders down the river, to acquaint them with the French general's death, and the return of the major part of the French army into winter quarters.

The waters were quite impassable without swimming our horses; which obliged us to get the loan of a canoe from Frazier, and to send Barnaby Currin and Henry Steward down the Monongahela with our baggage, to meet us at the Forks of the Ohio, about ten miles, there to cross the Alegheny.

As I got down before the canoe, I spent some time in viewing the rivers and the land in the Fork, which I think extremely well situated for a fort, as it has the absolute command of both rivers. The land at the point is twenty or twenty-five feet above the common surface of the water, and a considerable bottom of flat well-timbered land all around it, very convenient for building. The rivers are each a quarter of a mile or more across, and run here very nearly at right angles; Alegheny bearing N. E. and Monongahela S. E.: the former of these is a very rapid and swift running water; the other deep and still, without any perceptible fall.

About two miles from this, on the south-east side of the river, at the place where the Ohio Company intended to erect a fort, lives

to withdraw from that country, it was deemed necessary to make some preparations to maintain the right

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lives Shingiss, King of the Delawares. We called upon him, to invite him to council at the Loggs Town.

As I had taken a good deal of notice yesterday of the situation at the Forks, my curiosity led me to examine this more particularly; and I think it greatly inferior, either for defence or advantages, especially the latter. For a fort at the Forks would be equally well situated on the Ohio, and have the entire command of the Monongahela, which runs up our settlement, and is extremely well designed for water-carriage, as it is of a deep, still nature: besides, a fort at the Fork might be built at much less expence than at the other place.

Nature has well contrived this lower place for water defence; but the hill whereon it must stand being about a quarter of a mile in length, and then descending gradually on the land-side, will render it difficult and very expensive to make a sufficient fortification there. The whole flat upon the hill must be taken in; the side next the descent made extremely high, or else the hill itself cut away; otherwise the enemy may raise batteries within that distance without being exposed to a single shot from the fort.

Shingiss attended us to the Loggs Town, where we arrived, between sun-setting and dark, the twenty-fifth day after I left Williamsburg. We travelled over some extremely good and bad land to get to this place.

As soon as I came into town, I went to Monakatoocha (as the half king was out at his hunting-cabin on Little Beaver Creek, about fifteen miles off) and informed him by John Davidson, my Indian interpreter, that I was sent a messenger to the French general, and was ordered to call upon the sachems of the Six Nations to acquaint them with it. I gave him a string of wampum

right asserted over it by the British crown: and the assembly of Virginia determined to authorise the governor,

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and a twist of tobacco, and desired him to send for the half king; which he promised to do by a runner in the morning, and for other sachems. I invited him and the other great men present to my tent, where they stayed about an hour and returned.

According to the best observation I could make, Mr. Gist's new settlement (which we passed by) bears about W. N. W. seventy miles from Willis's Creek; Shanapins, or the Forks, N. by W. or N. N. W. about fifty miles from that, and from thence to the Loggs Town, the course is nearly west, about eighteen or twenty miles; so that the whole distance which we went we computed to be at least one hundred and thirty-five or one hundred and forty miles from our back inhabitants.

25th. Came to town four of ten Frenchmen, who had deserted from a company at Kuskuskas, which lies at the mouth of this river. I got the following account from them:—They were sent from New Orleans with a hundred men and eight canoe-loads of provisions to this place, where they expected to have met the same number of men from the forts on this side of Lake Erie to convoy them and the stores up, who were not arrived when they ran off.

I inquired into the situation of the French on the Mississipi, their numbers, and what forts they had built. They informed me that there were four small forts between New Orleans and the Black Islands, garrisoned with about thirty or forty men, and a few small pieces in each. That at New Orleans, which is near the mouth of the Mississipi, there are thirty-five companies of forty men each, with a pretty strong fort mounting eight carriage guns; and at the Black Islands there are several companies and a fort with six guns. The Black Islands are about a hundred and thirty leagues above the mouth of the Ohio, which is about three hundred and

fifty

governor, with the advice of council, to raise a regiment for that purpose, to consist of three hundred

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fifty above New Orleans. "They also acquainted me that there was a small palisadoed fort on the Ohio, at the mouth of the Obaish, about sixty leagues from the Mississipi. The Obaish heads near the west end of Lake Erie, and affords the communication between the French on the Mississipi and those on the Lakes.

These deserters came up from the lower Shanoah Town with one Brown, an Indian trader, and were going to Philadelphia.

About three o'clock this evening the half king came to town. I went up and invited him, with Davidson, privately to my tent, and desired him to relate some of the particulars of his journey to the French commandant, and of his reception there; also to give me an account of the ways and distance. He told me that the nearest and levelest way was now impassable, by reason of many large miry savannas; that we must be obliged to go by Venango, and should not get to the near fort in less than five or six night's sleep, good travelling. When he went to the fort he said he was received in a very stern manner by the late commander, who asked him very abruptly what he had come about, and to declare his business; which he said he did in the following speech:

"Fathers, I am come to tell you your own speeches; what your own mouths have declared. Fathers, you in former days set a silver bason before us, wherein there was the leg of a beaver, and desired all the nations to come and eat of it, to eat in peace and plenty, and not to be churlish to one another; and that if any such person should be found to be a disturber, I here lay down by the edge of the dish a rod, which you must scourge them with; and if your father should get foolish in my old days, I desire you may use it upon me as well as others.

"Now, fathers, it is you who are the disturbers in this land, by coming

dred men. The command of this regiment was given to a Mr. Frye, a gentleman supposed to be well

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coming and building your towns, and taking the land away unknown to us, and by force.

"Fathers, we kindled a fire long time ago at a place called Montreal, where we desired you to stay, and not to come and intrude upon our land. I now desire you may dispatch to that place; for be it known to you, fathers, that this is our land, and not yours.

"Fathers, I desire you may hear me with civility; if not, we must handle that rod which was laid down for the use of the obstreperous. If you had come in a peaceable manner, like our brothers, the English, we would not have been against you trading with us, as they do; but to come, fathers, and build houses upon our land, and to take it by force, is what we cannot submit to.

"Fathers, both you and the English are white: we live in a country between, therefore the land belongs to neither one nor the other: but the Great Being above allowed it to be a place of residence for us; so, fathers, I desire you to withdraw, as I have done our brothers the English, for I will keep you at arm's length. I lay this down as a trial for both, to see which will have the greatest regard to it, and that side we will stand by, and make equal sharers with us. Our brothers, the English, have heard this, and I come now to tell it to you, for I am not afraid to discharge you of this land." This he said was the substance of what he spoke to the general, who made this reply:

"Now, my child, I have heard your speech: you spoke first, but it is my time to speak now. Where is my wampum that you took away, with the marks of towns in it? This wampum I do not know, which you have discharged me off the land with. But you need not put yourself to the trouble of speaking, for I will not hear you. I am not afraid of flies or musquitoes, for Indians are such

well acquainted with the western country; and Major Washington was appointed lieutenant-colonel. Extremely

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such as those. I tell you, down that river I will go, and build upon it, according to my command. If the river was blocked up I have forces sufficient to burst it open, and tread under my feet all that stand in opposition, together with their alliances; for my force is as the sand upon the sea-shore; therefore here is your wampum; I fling it at you. Child, you talk foolish; you say this land belongs to you, but there is not the black of my nail yours. I saw that land sooner than you did, before the Shanoahs and you were at war. Lead was the man who went down and took possession of that river. It is my land, and I will have it, let who will stand up for, or say against it. *I'll buy and sell with* the English (mockingly.) If people will he ruled by me, they may expect kindness, but not else."

The half king told me he had inquired of the general after two Englishmen, who were made prisoners, and received this answer: "Child, you think it a very great hardship that I made prisoners of those two people at Venango. Don't you concern yourself with it: we took and carried them to Canada, to get intelligence of what the English were doing in Virginia."

He informed me that they had built two forts, one on Lake Erie, and another on French Creek, near a small lake, about fifteen miles asunder, and a large waggon-road between. They are both built after the same model, but different in size: that on the lake the largest. He gave me a plan of them of his own drawing.

The Indians inquired very particularly after their brothers in Carolina gaol.

They also asked what sort of a boy it was who was taken from the south branch; for they were told by some Indians, that a party of

Extremely solicitous to be engaged as early as possible in active service, and to be usefully employed, he

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of French Indians had carried a white boy by Kuskuska Town towards the Lakes.

26th. We met in council at the Long-house about 9 o'clock, where I spoke to them as follows:

"Brothers, I have called you together in council by order of your brother, the Governor of Virginia, to acquaint you that I am sent with all possible dispatch to visit and deliver a letter to the French commandant of very great importance to your brothers, the English; and I dare say to you, their friends and allies.

"I was desired, brothers, by your brother, the governor, to call upon you, the sachems of the nations, to inform you of it, and to ask your advice and assistance to proceed the nearest and best road to the French. You see, brothers, I have got thus far on my journey.

"His honour, likewise, desired me to apply to you for some of your young men to conduct and provide provisions for us on our way, and be a safeguard against those French Indians who have taken up the hatchet against us. I have spoken thus particularly to you, brothers, because his honour, our governor, treats you as good friends and allies, and hold you in great esteem. To confirm what I have said, I give you this string of wampum."

After they had considered for some time on the above discourse, the half king got up and spoke:

"Now, my brother, in regard to what my brother the governor had desired of me, I return you this answer:

"I rely upon you as a brother ought to do; as you say we are brothers, and one people. We shall put heart in hand, and speak to our fathers, the French, concerning the speech they made to me, and you may depend that we will endeavour to be your guard.

"Brother,

he obtained permission, about the beginning of April, to march with two companies, in advance of the

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" Brother, as you have asked my advice, I hope you will be ru'ed by it, and stay till I can provide a company to go with you. The French speech-belt is not here; I have it to go for to my hunting-cabin. Likewise the people whom I have ordered in are not yet come, and cannot till the third night from this; till which time, bro'her, I must beg you to stay.

" I intend to send the guard of Mingos, Shanoahs, and Delawares, that our brothers may see the love and loyalty we bear them."

As I had orders to make all possible dispatch, and waiting here was very contrary to my inclination, I thanked him in the most suitable manner I could, and told him that my business required the greatest expedition, and would not admit of that delay. He was not well pleased that I should offer to go before the time he had appointed, and told me that he could not consent to our going without a guard, for fear some accident should befall us, and draw a reflection upon him. " Besides," said he, " this is a matter of no small moment, and must not be entered into without due consideration; for I intend to deliver up the French speech-belt, and make the Shanoahs and Delawares do the same." And accordingly he gave orders to king Shingiss, who was present, to attend on Wednesday night with the wampum; and two men of their nation to be in readiness to set out with us next morning. As I found it was impossible to get off without affronting them in the most egregious manner, I consented to stay.

I gave them back a string of wampum, which I met with at Mr. Frazier's, and which they sent with a speech to his honour the governor, to inform him that three nations of French Indians, viz. Chippoways, Ottoways, and Orundaks, had taken up the hatchet against

the other troops, to the Great Meadows. By this measure he expected to protect the country, to make

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against the English; and desired them to repeat it over again: but this they postponed doing till they met in full council with the Shanoah and Delaware chiefs.

27th. Runners were dispatched very early for the Shanoah chiefs. The half king set out himself to fetch the French speech-belt from his hunting-cabin.

28th. He returned this evening, and came with Monakatoocha and two other sachems to my tent; and begged (as they had complied with his honour the governor's request, in providing men, &c.) to know on what business we were going to the French? This was a question I had all along expected, and had provided as satisfactory an answer to as I could, which allayed their curiosity a little.

Monakatoocha informed me, that an Indian from Venango brought news, a few days ago, that the French had called all the Mingoes, Delawares, &c. together at that place; and told them that they intended to have been down the river this fall; but the waters were growing cold, and the winter advancing, which obliged them to go into quarters; but that they might assuredly expect them in the spring, with a far greater number: and desired that they might be quite passive, and not intermeddle, unless they had a mind to draw all their force upon them. For that they expected to fight the English three years (as they supposed there would be some attempts made to stop them), in which time they should conquer. But that, if they should prove equally strong, they and the English would join to cut them all off, and divide the land between them. That though they had lost their general, and some few of their soldiers, yet there were men enough to reinforce them, and make them masters of the Ohio.

This

make himself more perfectly acquainted with it, as well as with the situations and designs of the enemy;

This speech, he said, was delivered to them by one Capt. Joncaire, their interpreter in chief, living at Venango, and a man of note in the army.

29th. The half king and Monakatoocha came very early, and begged me to stay one day more: for, notwithstanding they had used all the diligence in their power, the Shanoah chiefs had not brought the wampum they ordered, but would certainly be in to-night; if not, they would delay me no longer, but would send it after us as soon as they arrived. When I found them so pressing in their request, and knew that returning of wampum was the abolishing of agreements; and giving this up was shaking off all dependence upon the French, I consented to stay, as I believed an offence offered at this crisis might be attended with greater ill consequence than another day's delay. They also informed me that Shingiss could not get in his men; and was prevented from coming himself by his wife's sickness (I believe, by fear of the French); but that the wampum of that nation was lodged with Kustaloga, one of their chiefs at Venango.

In the evening, late, they came again, and acquainted me that the Shanoahs were not yet arrived, but that it should not retard the prosecution of our journey. He delivered in my hearing the speech that was to be made to the French by Jeskakake, one of their old chiefs, which was giving up the belt the late commandant had asked for, and repeating nearly the same speech he himself had done before.

He also delivered a string of wampum to this chief, which was sent by King Shingiss, to be given to Kustaloga, with orders to repair to the French, and deliver up the wampum.

He likewise gave a very large string of black and white wam-

enemy; and to preserve the friendship of the savages. Immediately after his arrival at that place, he

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pum, which was to be sent up immediately to the Six Nations, if the French refused to quit the land at this warning, which was the third and last time, and was the right of Jeskakake to deliver.

30th. Last night the great men assembled at their Council House, to consult further about this journey, and who were to go. The result of which was, that only three of their chiefs, with one of their best hunters, should be our convoy. The reason they gave for not sending more, after what had been proposed at council the 26th, was, that a greater number might give the French suspicions of some bad design, and cause them to be treated rudely: but I rather think they could not get their hunters in.

We set out about nine o'clock with the half king Jeskakake, White Thunder, and the Hunter, and travelled on the road to Venango, where we arrived the 4th of December, without any thing remarkable happening but a continued series of bad weather.

This is an old Indian town, situated at the mouth of French Creek, on the Ohio, and lies near N. about sixty miles from the Loggs-Town, but more than seventy the way we were obliged to go.

We found the French colours hoisted at a house from which they had driven Mr. John Frazier, an English subject. I immediately repaired to it, to know where the commander resided. There were three officers, one of whom, Captain Joncaire, informed me that he had the command of the Ohio; but that there was a general officer at the near fort, where he advised me to apply for an answer. He invited us to sup with them, and treated us with the greatest complaisance.

The wine, as they dosed themselves pretty plentifully with it, soon banished the restraint which at first appeared in their conversation,

he was visited by some friendly Indians, who informed him that the French had dispossessed a party

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sation, and give a license to their tongues to reveal their sentiments more freely.

They told me, that it was their absolute design to take possession of the Ohio, and by G—d they would do it: for that, although they were sensible the English could raise two men for their one, yet they knew their motions were too slow and dilatory to prevent any undertaking of theirs. They pretended to have an undoubted right to the river, from a discovery made by one La Solle sixty years ago; and the rise of this expedition is to prevent our settling on the river or waters of it, as they heard of some families moving out in order thereto. From the best intelligence I could get, there have been fifteen hundred men on this side Ontario Lake. But upon the death of the general, all were recalled to about six or seven hundred, who were left to garrison four forts, one hundred and fifty or thereabouts in each. The first of them is on French Creek, near a small lake, about sixty miles from Venango, near N. N. W.: the rest lie on Lake Erie, where the greater part of their stores are kept, about fifteen miles from the other. From this it is one hundred and twenty miles to the carrying-place, at the falls of Lake Erie, where there is a small fort which they lodge their goods at in bringing them from Montreal, the place from whence all their stores are brought. The next fort lies about twenty miles from this, on Ontario Lake. Between this fort and Montreal there are three others, the first of which is nearly opposite to the English fort, Oswego. From the fort on Lake Erie, to Montreal, is about six hundred miles; which they say, requires no more (if good weather) than four weeks voyage, if they go in barks or large vessels, so that they may cross the lake: but if they come in canoes, it will require five or six weeks, for they are obliged to keep under the shore.

 5th. Rained

party of workmen employed by the Ohio Company to erect a fort on the south-eastern branch of the Ohio,

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5th. Rained excessively all day, which prevented our travelling. Captain Joncaire sent for the half king, as he had but just heard that he came with me. He affected to be much concerned that I did not make free to bring them in before. I excused it in the best manner of which I was capable, and told him I did not think their company agreeable, as I heard him say a good deal in dispraise of Indians in general. But another motive prevented me from bringing them into his company. I knew that he was an interpreter, and a person of very great influence among the Indians, and had lately used all possible means to draw them over to his interest; therefore I was desirous of giving him no opportunity that could be avoided.

When they came in, there was great pleasure expressed at seeing them. He wondered how they could be so near, without coming to visit him; made several trifling presents; and applied liquor so fast, that they were soon rendered incapable of the business they came about, notwithstanding the caution which was given.

6th. The half king came to my tent, quite sober, and insisted very much that I should stay and hear what he had to say to the French. I fain would have prevented him from speaking any thing till he came to the commandant, but could not prevail. He told me, that at this place a council-fire was kindled, where all their business with these people was to be transacted; and that the management of the Indian affairs was left solely to Monsieur Joncaire. As I was desirous of knowing the issue of this, I agreed to stay; but sent our horses a little way up French Creek to raft over and encamp, which I knew would make it near night.

About ten o'clock they met in council. The king spoke much the same as he had before done to the general; and offered the French

Ohio, and were themselves then engaged in completing a fortification at the confluence of the Aleghany

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French speech-belt which had before been demanded, with the marks of four towns on it, which Monsieur Joncaire refused to receive, but desired him to carry it to the fort to the commander.

7th. Monsieur La Force, commissary of the French stores, and three other soldiers came over to accompany us up. We found it extremely difficult to get the Indians off to-day, as every stratagem had been used to prevent their going up with me. I had last night left John Davidson (the Indian interpreter) whom I brought with me from town, and strictly charged him not to be out of their company, as I could not get them over to my tent; for they had some business with Kustaloga, chiefly to know why he did not deliver up the French belt which he had in keeping. But I was obliged to send Mr. Gist over to-day to fetch them; which he did with great persuasion.

At twelve o'clock we set out for the fort, and were prevented from arriving there until the 11th, by excessive rains, snows, and bad travelling through many mires and swamps. Those we were obliged to pass to avoid crossing the creek, which was impossible either by fording or rafting, the water was so high and rapid.

We went over much good land since we passed Venango, and through several extensive and very rich meadows, one of which I believe was nearly four miles in length, and considerably wide in some places.

12th. I prepared to wait upon the commander early, and was received and conducted to him by the second officer in command. I acquainted him with my business, and offered my commission and letter; both of which he desired me to keep, until the arrival of Monsieur Reparti, captain at the next fort, who was sent for, and expected every hour.

Aleghany and Monongahela Rivers; and that a detachment from that place was then on its march towards

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This commander is a knight of the military order of St Lewis, and named Legardeur de St. Pierre. He is an elderly gentleman, and has much the air of a soldier. He was sent over to take the command immediately upon the death of the late general, and arrived here about seven days before me.

At two o'clock, the gentleman who was sent for arrived, when I offered the letter, &c. again, which they received, and adjourned into a private apartment for the captain to translate, who understood a little English. After he had done it, the commander desired I would walk in, and bring my interpreter to peruse and correct it; which I did.

13th. The chief officers retired to hold a council of war; which gave me an opportunity of taking the dimensions of the fort, and making what observations I could.

It is situated on the south or west fork of French Creek, near the water, and is almost surrounded by the creek, and a small branch of it which forms a kind of island. Four houses compose the sides; the bastions are made of piles driven into the ground, standing more than twelve feet above it, and sharp at top, with port-holes cut for cannon, and loop-holes for the small arms to fire through. There are eight six-pound pieces mounted in each bastion, and one piece of four-pound before the gate. In the bastions are a guard-house, chapel, doctor's lodging, and the commander's private store; round which are laid platforms for the cannon and men to stand on. There are several barracks without the fort, for the soldiers' dwelling, covered, some with bark, and some with boards, made chiefly with logs. There are also several other houses, such as stables, smiths' shop, &c.

I could get no certain account of the number of men here; but, according

towards the Great Meadows. Open hostilities had not yet commenced, but the country was considered as

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according to the best judgment I could form, there are a hundred, exclusive of officers, of which there are many. I also gave orders to the people who were with me, to take an exact account of the canoes which were hauled up to convey their forces down in the spring. This they did, and told fifty of birch bark, and a hundred and seventy of pine, besides many others which were blocked out in readiness for being made.

14th. As the snow increased very fast, and our horses daily became weaker, I sent them off unloaded, under the care of Barnaby Currin, and two others, to make all convenient dispatch to Venango, and there to wait our arrival, if there was a prospect of the river's freezing: if not, then to continue down to Shanapins Town, at the forks of the Ohio, and there to wait until we came to cross the Aleghany; intending myself to go down by water, as I had the offer of a canoe or two.

As I found many plots concerted to retard the Indian's business, and prevent their returning with me, I endeavoured all that lay in my power to frustrate their schemes, and hurried them on to execute their intended design. They accordingly pressed for admittance this evening; which at length was granted them, privately, to the commander and one or two other officers. The half king told me that he offered the wampum to the commander, who evaded taking it, and made many fair promises of love and friendship; said he wanted to live in peace, and trade amicably with them,—as a proof of which, he would send some goods immediately down to the Loggs Town for them. But I rather think the design of that is, to bring away all our straggling traders they meet with, as I privately understood they intended to carry an officer, &c. with them. And what rather confirms this opinion, I was

as invaded; and several circumstances were related contributing to the opinion that this party was ap-

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inquiring of the commander by what authority he had made prisoners of several English subjects. He told me that the country belonged to them; that no Englishman had a right to trade upon those waters; and that he had orders to make every person prisoner who attempted it on the Ohio or the waters of it.

I inquired of Captain Riparti about the boy that was carried by this place, as it was done while the command devolved on him, between the death of the late general and the arrival of the present. He acknowledged that a boy had been carried past, and that the Indians had two or three white men's scalps (I was told at Venango eight), but pretended to have forgotten the name of the place where the boy came from, and all the particular facts, though he had questioned him for some hours as they were carrying him past. I likewise inquired what they had done with John Trotter, and James Mac Clochlan, two Pennsylvania traders, whom they had taken, with all their goods. They told me that they had been sent to Canada, but were now returned home.

This evening I received an answer to his honour the govenor's letter, from the commandant.

15th. The commandant ordered a plentiful store of liquor, provisions, &c. to be put on board our canoe, and appeared to be extremely complaisant, though he was exerting every artifice which he could invent to set our Indians at variance with us, to prevent their going till after our departure: presents, rewards, and every thing which could be suggested by him or his officers. I cannot say that ever in my life I suffered so much anxiety as I did in this affair. I saw that every stratagem which the most fruitful brain could invent was practised to win the half kill to their interest; and that leaving him there was giving them the opportunity they aimed

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proaching with hostile views. Among others it was stated that they had left the path some distance,

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at. I went to the half king, and pressed him in the strongest terms to go. He told me that the commandant would not discharge him till the morning. I then went to the commandant and desired him to do their business, and complained of ill-treatment; for keeping them, as they were part of my company, was detaining me. This he promised not to do, but to forward my journey as much as he could. He protested he did not keep them, but was ignorant of the cause of their stay; though I soon found it out. He had promised them a present of guns, &c. if they would wait till the morning. As I was very much pressed by the Indians to wait this day for them, I consented, on a promise that nothing should hinder them in the morning.

16th. The French were not slack in their inventions to keep the Indians this day also. But as they were obliged, according to promise, to give the present, they then endeavoured to try the power of liquor, which I doubt not would have prevailed at any other time than this: but I urged and insisted with the king so closely upon his word, that he refrained, and set off with us as he had engaged.

We had a tedious and very fatiguing passage down the creek. Several times we had like to have been staved against rocks; and many times were obliged all hands to get out and remain in the water half an hour or more, getting over the shoals. At one place the ice had lodged, and made it impassable by water; we were therefore obliged to carry our canoe across the neck of land, a quarter of a mile over. We did not reach Venango till the 22d, where we met with our horses.

This creek is extremely crooked. I dare say the distance be-

tance, and had encamped for the night in a bottom, in a secret retired situation, as if to secure concealment.

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tween the fort and Venango cannot be less than one hundred and thirty miles, to follow the meanders.

23d. When I got things ready to set off, I sent for the half king, to know whether he intended to go with us or by water. He told me that White Thunder had hurt himself much, and was sick and unable to walk; therefore he was obliged to carry him down in a canoe. As I found he intended to stay there a day or two, and knew that Monsieur Joncaire would employ every scheme to set him against the English, as he had before done, I told him I hoped he would guard against his flattery, and let no fine speeches influence him in their favour. He desired I might not be concerned, for he knew the French too well for any thing to engage him in their favour; and that though he could not go down with us, he yet would endeavour to meet at the forks with Joseph Campbell, to deliver a speech for me to carry to his honour the governor. He told me he would order the young hunter to attend us, and get provisions, &c. if wanted.

Our horses were now so weak and feeble, and the baggage so heavy, (as we were obliged to provide all the necessaries which the journey would require,) that we doubted much their performing it. Therefore, myself and others, except the drivers who where obliged to ride, gave up our horses for packs, to assist along with the baggage. I put myself in an Indian walking-dress, and continued with them three days, till I found there was no probability of their getting home in any reasonable time. The horses became less able to travel every day; the cold increased very fast: and the roads were becoming much worse by a deep snow, continually freezing: therefore as I was uneasy to get back, to make report of my

ment. The Indians offering themselves as guides, Colonel Washington set out in a dark rainy night, in

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my proceedings to his honour the governor, I determined to prosecute my journey the nearest way through the woods on foot.

Accordingly, I left Mr. Vanbraam in charge of our baggage, with money and directions to provide necessaries from place to place for themselves and horses, and to make the most convenient dispatch in travelling.

I took my necessary papers, pulled off my clothes, and tied myself up in a watch-coat. Then, with gun in hand, and pack on my back, in which were my papers and provisions, I set out with Mr. Gist, fitted in the same manner, on Wednesday the 26th. The day following, just after we had passed a place called Murdering Town, (where we intended to quit the path, and steer across the country at Shannapins Town), we fell in with a party of French Indians who had lain in wait for us.

One of them fired at Mr. Gist or me, not fifteen steps off, but fortunately missed. We took this fellow into custody, and kept him till about nine o'clock at night; then let him go, and walked all the remaining part of the night, without making any stop, that we might get the start so far as to be out of the reach of their pursuit the next day, since we were well assured that they would follow our track as soon as it was light. The next day we continued travelling till quite dark, and got to the river, about two miles above Shannapins. We expected to have found the river frozen, but it was not, only about fifty yards from each shore: the ice I supposed had broken up above, for it was driving in vast quantities.

There was no way for getting over but on a raft, which we set about with but one axe or hatchet, and finished just after sun-setting. This

in the course of which he surrounded and completely surprised the French encampment, which was but a few

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This was a whole day's work: we next got it launched; then went on board of it and set off: but before we were half way over, we were jammed in the ice in such a manner that we expected every moment our raft to sink and ourselves to perish. I put out my setting-pole to try to stop the raft, that the ice might pass by; when the rapidity of the stream threw it with so much violence against the pole, that it jerked me out into ten feet water. But I fortunately saved myself, by catching hold on one of the raft logs. Notwithstanding all our efforts, we could not get to either shore; but were obliged, as we were near an island, to quit our raft and make to it.

The cold was so extremely severe, that Mr. Gist had all his fingers and some of his toes frozen; and the water was shut up so hard, that we found no difficulty in getting off the island on the ice in the morning, and went to Mr. Frazier's. We met here with twenty warriors, who were going to the southward to war. But coming to a place on the head of the Great Kanawa, where they found seven people killed and scalped, (all but one woman with very light hair,) they turned about and ran back, for fear the inhabitants should rise and take them as the authors of the murder. They report that the bodies were lying about the house, and some of them much torn and eaten by the hogs. By the marks which were left, they say they were French Indians of the Ottoway nation, &c. who did it.

As we intended to take horses here, and it required some time to find them, I went up about three miles to the mouth of Yohogany, to visit Queen Aliquippa, who had expressed great concern that we passed her in going to the fort. I made her a present

few miles west of the Great Meadows. About day-break his troops fired and rushed upon the French, who immediately surrendered; one man only escaped; and M. Jumonville, the commanding officer of the party, was the only person killed.

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of a watch-coat and a bottle of rum; which latter was thought much the better present of the two.

Tuesday, the 1st of January, we left Mr. Frazier's house, and arrived at Mr. Gist's, at Monongahela, the 2d, where I bought a horse, saddle, &c.

The 6th we met seventeen horses loaded with materials and stores for a fort at the Forks of Ohio, and the day after some families going out to settle. This day we arrived at Willis's Creek, after as fatiguing a journey as it is possible to conceive; rendered so by excessive bad weather. From the first day of December to the fifteenth, there was but one day on which it did not rain or snow incessantly; and throughout the whole journey we met with nothing but one continued series of cold wet weather, which occasioned very uncomfortable lodgings; especially after we had quitted our tent, which was some screen from the inclemency of it.

On the 11th I got to Belvour, where I stopped one day to take necessary rest, and then set out and arrived in Williamsburg the 16th; when I waited upon his honour the governor with the letter I had brought from the French commandant, and to give an account of the success of my proceedings. This I beg leave to do by offering the foregoing narrative, as it contains the most remarkable occurrences which happened in my journey.

I hope what has been said will be sufficient to make your honour satisfied with my conduct; for that was my aim in undertaking the journey, and chief study throughout the prosecution of it.

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The residue of the regiment was now on its way to join the detachment advanced in their front. On the march Colonel Frye died at Paterson's Creek, and the command devolved on Colonel Waſhington. Their junction was effected at the Great Meadows; soon after which two independent companies of regulars arrived at the same place, the one from South Carolina, and the other from New York, making in the whole, for the Virginia regiment was not complete, somewhat less than four hundred effective men. The regular captains objected to being commanded by a provincial officer; but, under exiſting circumstances, the dispute about rank was waved for the moment, and the command rested with Colonel Washington. A small stockade, afterwards called Fort Neceſſity, was erected at the Great Meadows, for the purpose of securing the provisions from horses; after which the troops commenced their march towards Fort du Quesne, with the intention of dislodging the French from that place. They had proceeded to the weſtern-most foot of the Laurel Hill, about thirteen miles from Fort Neceſſity, when intelligence was received which terminated their march. They were there met by some friendly Indians, who informed them that the enemy was rapidly advancing as numerous as the pigeons in the woods. Among those who brought this information was a very trusty chief, who had left the fort on the Ohio only two days before,

before, where he had seen a considerable reinforcement arrive, and had heard the intention declared of marching immediately to attack the Engliſh, with a corps composed of eighteen hundred French and four hundred Indians. This intelligence was corroborated by the information already received from deserters who had come in a few days before, and had assured them that a reinforcement was expected. The troops had been without bread for six days, and had but a very small supply of meat. The enemy could approach within five miles of their position by water, and might either pass them by a road leading through the country some distance from them, so as to cut off all supplies, and starve them into a surrender, or fight them with a superiority of three to one.

In this hazardous situation a council of war was called, and the officers unanimously advised that they ſhould retire to the fort at the Great Meadows, where the two roads united, and the country would not easily admit the passage of an enemy without being perceived. At that place it was intended to remain till reinforcements of men and supplies of provisions should arrive.

In pursuance of this advice, Colonel Waſhington retired to Fort Necessity, and began a ditch around the stockade. Before it was completed, the enemy, supposed to amount to fifteen hundred men, under the command of Mons. de Villiers, appeared,

peared, and immediately commenced a furious attack upon the fort; where they were received with great intrepidity. The Americans fought partly within the stockade, and partly in the surrounding ditch, which was ready filled with mud and water. Colonel Washington in person continued the whole day on the outside of the fort, encouraging the soldiers by his countenance and example. The enemy fought under cover of the trees and high grass with which the country abounded. The engagement was continued with great resolution from ten in the morning till dark, when Mons. de Villiers demanded a parley, and offered terms of capitulation. The proposals first made were rejected; but in the course of the night articles were signed, by which the fort was surrendered, on condition that its garrison should be allowed the honours of war; should be permitted to retain their arms and baggage; and to march without molestation into the inhabited parts of Virginia. The capitulation being in French, a language not understood by Colonel Washington or any of his party, and drawn up in the night under circumstances not admitting delay, contains an expression which was at the time untruly translated by the interpreter, advantage of which has since been taken by the enemies of that gentleman, to imply an admission on his part, that the officer killed

killed in the action preceding the attack on the fort was assassinated.

An account of the transaction was published by M. de Villiers, which drew from Colonel Washington a letter addressed to a friend, completely disproving a calumny, which, though entirely discredited at the time, was revived at a subsequent period, when circumstances well understood at the date of the transaction might be supposed to be forgotten*. The whole loss sustained by the Americans

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* The Author is indebted for the letter alluded to, to the editor of the Lancaster Journal:—

SIR,

I am really sorry I have it not in my power to answer your request in a more satisfactory manner. If you had favoured me with the journal a few days sooner, I would have examined it carefully, and endeavoured to point out such errors as might conduce to your use, my advantage, and the public satisfaction; but now it is out of my power.

I had no time to make any remarks upon that piece which is called my journal. The inclosed are observations on the French notes; they are of no use to me separated, nor will they, I believe, be of any to you; yet I send them unconnected and incoherent as they were taken, for I have no opportunity to correct them.

In regard to the journal, I can only observe in general, that I kept no regular one during that expedition; rough minutes of occurrences I certainly took, and find them as certainly and strangely metamorphosed; some parts left out which I remember

ricans in this affair is not ascertained. From a return made on the 9th of July at Willis's Creek, it

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ber were entered, and many things added that never were thought of; the names of men and things egregiously miscalled, and the whole of what I saw Englished is very incorrect and nonsensical; yet I will not pretend to say that the little body who brought it to me has not made a literal translation and a good one.

Short as my time is, I cannot help remarking on Villier's account of the battle of, and transactions at, the Meadows, as it is very extraordinary, and not less erroneous than inconsistent. He says, the French received the first fire: it is well known that we received it at six hundred paces distance. He also says, our fears obliged us to retreat in the most disorderly manner after the capitulation. How is this consistent with his other account? He acknowledges that we sustained the attack warmly, from ten in the morning till dark, and that he called first to parley; which strongly indicates that we were not totally absorbed in fear. If the gentleman in his account had adhered to the truth, he must have confessed, that we looked upon his offer to parley as an artifice to get into and examine our trenches; and refused, on this account, till they desired an officer might be sent to them, and gave their parole for his safe return. He might also, if he had been as great a lover of the truth as he was of vain-glory, have said, that we absolutely refused their first and second proposals, and would consent to capitulate on no other terms than such as we obtained. That we were wilfully or ignorantly deceived by our interpreter in regard to the word *assassination*, I do aver, and will to my dying moment; so will every officer that was present. The interpreter was a Dutchman, little acquainted with the English tongue, therefore might not advert to the tone and meaning of the word in English; but, whatever his motives were for so doing, certain it is, he called

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it appears that the killed and wounded of the Virginia regiment amounted to fifty-eight; but the

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it the *death* or the *loss* of the Sieur Jumonville. So we received, and so we understood it, till, to our great surprise and mortification, we found it otherwise in a literal translation. That we left our baggage and horses at the Meadows is certain; that there was not even a possibility to bring them away is equally certain, as we had every horse belonging to the camp killed or taken away during the action, so that it was impracticable to bring any thing off that our shoulders were not able to bear; and to wait there was impossible, for we had scarcely three days' provisions, and were seventy miles from a supply. Yet, to say we came off precipitately is absolutely false; notwithstanding they did, contrary to articles, suffer their Indians to pillage our baggage, and commit all kinds of irregularity: we were with them till ten o'clock the next day: we destroyed our powder and other stores, nay, even our private baggage, to prevent its falling into their hands, as we could not bring it off. When we had got about a mile from the place of action, we missed two or three of the wounded, and sent a party back to bring them up (this is the party he speaks of). We brought them all safe off, and encamped within three miles of the Meadows. These are circumstances, I think, that make it evidently clear, that we were not very apprehensive of danger. The colours he speaks of to be left was a large flag of immense size and weight; our regimental colours were brought off, and are now in my possession. Their gasconades and boasted clemency must appear in the most ludicrous light to every considerate person who reads Villiers's journal;—such preparations for an attack, such vigour and intrepidity as he pretends to have conducted his march with, such revenge as, by his own account, appeared in his at-

the loss of the two independent companies is not stated. It was conjectured, that on the part of the enemy about two hundred were killed and wounded, and it is probable that this conjecture does not greatly err.

Notwithstanding the stipulation, that the troops should be unmolested on their march, heavy complaints were made of their being plundered and maltreated by the Indians. The cause of their complaints was perhaps unavoidable; for it was always found extremely difficult to secure, on the part of these troublesome allies and formidable enemies, an obfervance of engagements.

Great credit was given to Colonel Washington by his countrymen for the courage displayed on this occasion; and the legislature were so satisfied with

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tack, considered, it will hardly be thought that compassion was his motive for calling a parley. But to sum up the whole, M. Villiers pays himself no great compliment in saying we were struck with a panic when matters were adjusted: we surely could not be afraid without cause, and if we had cause after capitulation, it was a reflection upon himself.

I do not doubt but your good-nature will excuse the badness of my paper, and the incoherence of my writing: think you see me in a public house, in a crowd, surrounded with noise, and you hit my case. You do me particular honour in offering your friendship; I wish I may be so happy as always to merit it and deserve your correspondence, which I should be glad to cultivate.

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the conduct of the party, as to vote their thanks* to him, and the officers under his command. They also gave three hundred pistoles to be distributed among the soldiers engaged in the action, as a reward for their bravery.

The regiment returned to Winchester to be recruited; and the companies expected from North Carolina and Maryland having arrived, Governor Dinwiddie, without attending to the condition or number of the forces, ordered them, on the advice of council, immediately to march over the Alegany mountains, either to dispossess the French of their fort, or to build one in some proper place in the country.

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* To the vote of thanks, the officers made the following reply:

"We, the officers of the Virginia regiment, are highly sensible of the particular mark of distinction with which you have honoured us, in returning your thanks for our behaviour in the late action; and cannot help testifying our grateful acknowledgments for your "*high sense*" of what we shall always esteem a duty to our country and the best of kings.

"Favoured with your regard, we shall zealously endeavour to deserve your applause, and by our future actions strive to convince the worshipful House of Burgesses, how much we esteem their approbation; and, as it ought to be, regard it as the voice of our country.

Signed, for the whole corps,

GEORGE WASHINGTON."

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The little army in Virginia, which was placed under the command of Colonel Innes, from North Carolina, did not, as now reinforced, exceed half the number of the enemy, and was unprovided with the means of moving, or with those supplies for a winter campaign which are so particularly necessary in the severe climate where they were about to act. With as little consideration, directions were given for the immediate completion of the regiment, without furnishing a single shilling with which to recruit a man. Although Virginia had long basked in the sunshine of peace, it seems difficult to account for such inconsiderate and ill-judged measures. Colonel Washington remonstrated strongly against these orders, but prepared as far as possible to execute them. The assembly, however, having risen in a few days, without making any provision whatever for the further prosecution of the war, this wild expedition was for the present relinquished.

After the season for action was over, the Virginia regiment was reduced to independent companies; and in the course of the winter, orders were received for settling the rank of the officers of His Majesty's forces, when joined or serving with the provincial forces in North America; which directed, that all officers commissioned by the King, or by his General commanding in chief in North America, should take rank of all officers commissioned

sioned by the governors of the respective provinces. And further, that the general and field officers of the provincial troops should have no rank when serving with the general and field officers commissioned by the crown: but that all captains and other inferior officers of the royal troops should take rank over provincial officers of the same degree having senior commissions.

Though his original attachment to a military life had been rather increased by the applauses bestowed on his first essay in arms, Colonel Washington possessed too entirely the proud and punctilious feelings of a soldier to submit to a degradation so humiliating as this. Professing his unabated inclination to continue in the service, he retired indignantly from it, and answered the various letters which he received, pressing him still to hold his commission, with assurances, that he should serve with pleasure, when he should be enabled to do so without dishonour.

His eldest brother, Mr. Lawrence Washington who had been engaged in the expedition against Carthagena, had lately died, and left him a considerable estate on the Potomack, which, in compliment to the admiral who commanded the fleet engaged in that enterprise, by whom he had been particularly noticed, he had called *Mount Vernon*.

To this delightful spot, Colonel Washington now withdrew, resolving to devote all his future attention to the avocations of private life.

This resolution was not long maintained. General Braddock, being informed of his merit, his knowledge of the country which was to be the theatre of action, and his motives for retiring from the service (motives which that officer could not disapprove) gratified his desire to make one campaign under a person supposed to possess some knowledge of the art of war, by inviting him to enter into his family as a volunteer and aid-de-camp. This invitation Colonel Washington readily accepted, stipulating only for permission to employ himself in the arrangement of his private affairs till the general should be on his march, and that he might return to them when the active part of the campaign should be over.

Colonel Washington joined General Braddock immediately after his departure from Alexandria, and proceeded with him to Willis's Creek, afterwards called Fort Cumberland, where the army was detained, waiting for waggons, horses, and proper supplies of provisions, till about the 12th of June. From his knowledge of the service to be performed, he very early suggested the propriety of using, to a considerable extent, pack-horses instead of waggons for the baggage of the army. This advice was at first rejected; but soon after the commencement of the march, its propriety became too obvious to be longer neglected, and considerable changes were made in this respect.

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The army consisted of two British regiments with a few corps of provincials. On the third day after it had moved from its ground, and had marched but a little more than ten miles from Fort Cumberland, Colonel Washington was seized with a raging fever, which absolutely disab'ed him from riding on horseback. Persisting, however, in his refusal to remain behind the troops, he was conveyed with them in a covered waggon. General Braddock, who found the difficulties of the march, arising from the badness of the roads, and his long train of waggons, infinitely greater than had been expec'ed, still continued privately to consult Colonel Washington respecting the measures it would now be most proper to pursue. Retaining his first impressions on the manner of conducting the march, he strenuously urged the general to leave his heavy artillery and baggage behind with the rear division of the army, to follow by slow and easy marches, and to press forward himself as expeditiously as possible to Fort du Quesne with a chosen body of troops, some pieces of light artillery, and stores of absolute and immediate necessity. The reasons urged by him in support of this advice were, that, according to all their intelligence, the French were at present weak on the Ohio, but hourly expected reinforcements; that during the present excessive drought, those reinforcements could not arrive with the necessary quantity of provisions and other supplies, because the

river La Beuf, on which they must necessarily be brought to Venango, did not afford water enough to admit of their portage down it. By a rapid movement, therefore, it was extremely probable that the fort might be reached with a sufficient force to carry it before the arrival of the looked-for aid: but if this measure was not adopted, such were the delays attendant on the march of the whole army, that rains sufficient to raise the waters might reasonably be counted on, and the whole force of the French would probably be collected for their reception; a circumstance which might render the success of the expedition extremely doubtful.

This advice accorded well with the temper of the commander in chief; and it was determined in a council held at the Little Meadows, that twelve hundred men, selected from the different corps, to be commanded by General Braddock in person, accompanied by Sir Peter Halket, now acting as brigadier, the Lieutenant-colonels Gage and Burton, and by Major Sparke, should advance with the utmost expedition against Fort du Quesne. They were to take with them only such waggons as the train would absolutely require, and to carry their provisions and necessary baggage on horses. Colonel Dunbar and Major Chapman were to remain with the residue of the two regiments and all the heavy baggage.

This select corps commenced its march with only thirty carriages, including ammunition waggons, and these

these strongly horsed. The hopes, however, which had been entertained of the celerity of its movements were not fulfilled. "I found," said Colonel Washington, in a letter written during the march, to his brother, "that instead of pushing on with vigour, without regarding a little rough road, they were halting to level every mole hill, and to erect bridges over every brook." By these means they employed four days in reaching the great crossings of the Yohogany, only nineteen miles from the Little Meadows.

Here the situation of Colonel Washington, and the medicine which had been administered to him, rendered it indispensable for him to stop. The physician declared that his life would be endangered by continuing with the army; and General Braddock ordered him absolutely to remain at this camp, with a small guard left for his protection, till the arrival of Colonel Dunbar. These orders he very reluctantly obeyed, having first obtained from the general a solemn promise that means should be used to bring him up with the detachment in front, before it reached Fort du Quesne.

The day before the action of the Monongahela* he rejoined the general in a covered waggon. Though very weak, he immediately entered on the duties of his station.

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* An account of which has been given in vol. i. p. 314.

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In a very short time after the action had commenced he was the only aid remaining alive and unwounded On him alone devolved, in an engagement with marksmen who selected officers, and especially those on horseback, for their objects, the whole duty of carrying the orders of the commander in chief. Under these difficult circumstances he manifested that coolness, that self-possession and fearlessness of danger which ever distinguished him, and which are so necessary to the character of a consummate soldier. He had two horses killed under him, and four balls through his coat; but, to the astonishment of all, escaped unhurt, while every other officer on horseback was either killed or wounded. "I expected every moment," says an eye-witness*, "to see him fall." His duty and situation exposed him to every danger. Nothing but the superintending care of Providence could have saved him from the fate of all around him.

At length, after an action of near three hours, General Braddock, under whom three horses had been killed, received a mortal wound, and his troops gave way in all directions. The efforts made to rally them were ineffectual till they had crossed the Monongahela; when, being no longer pursued by the enemy, for the Indians were stopped by the

* Doctor Craik.

plunder,

plunder, they halted, and were again formed. The general was brought off in a small tumbril by Colonel Washington, Captain Stewart of his guards, and his servant. Colonel Washington was immediately dispatched to Dunbar's camp, to have some comfortable provisions prepared for the defeated army; which place he reached the next evening, and was soon followed by the remnant of the troops. On their arrival, all the stores, except those necessary for immediate use, were destroyed. General Braddock died at this place; and Colonel Dunbar, a short time afterwards, marched the remaining regular troops to Philadelphia, to go into what he called winter-quarters.

Colonel Washington was greatly disappointed and disgusted with the conduct of the regular troops on this occasion. In his letter to Lieutenant-governor Dinwiddie, giving an account of the action, he says, "They were struck with such inconceivable panic, that nothing but confusion and disobedience of orders prevailed among them. The officers in general behaved with incomparable bravery; for which they greatly suffered, there being upwards of sixty killed and wounded—a large proportion out of what we had.

"The Virginia companies behaved like men, and died like soldiers: for I believe, out of three companies on the ground that day, scarcely thirty men were left alive. Captain Peronny and all his officers,

down

down to a corporal, were killed. Captain Poulson had almost as hard a fate, for only one of his escaped.

"In short, the dastardly behaviour of the regular troops, so called, exposed those who were inclined to do their duty to almost certain death; and at length, in spite of every effort to the contrary, they broke, and ran as sheep before hounds, leaving the artillery, ammunition, provisions, baggage, and, in short, every thing, a prey to the enemy; and when we endeavoured to rally them, in hopes of regaining the ground, and what we had left upon it, it was with as little success as if we had attempted to have stopped the wild bears of the mountains, or the rivulets with our feet; for they would break by in spite of every effort to prevent it*."

Colonel Washington had for some time been considered as the pride and ornament of Virginia in the military line, and his reputation grew with every occasion for exertion which presented itself. His conduct in this battle was universally extolled; and the

* In another letter he says, "We have been beaten—shamefully beaten—shamefully beaten by a handful of men, who only intended to molest and disturb our march! Victory was their smallest expectation. But see the wondrous works of Providence! —the uncertainty of human things! We, but a few moments before, believed our numbers almost equal to the force of Canada; —they only expected to annoy us. Yet, contrary to all expectation and human probability, and even to the common course of things, we were totally defeated, and have sustained the loss of every thing!

common

common opinion of his countrymen was, that, had his advice been pursued, the destruction of the day had been avoided. The Assembly, which was in session when the intelligence of this defeat, and of the abandonment of the colony by Colonel Dunbar, was received, felt the necessity of levying troops for their defence; and it was determined to raise a regiment, to consist of sixteen companies. The command of this regiment was offered to Colonel Washington, who was also designated in his commission as the commander in chief of all the forces raised, and to be raised, in the colony of Virginia; and had the uncommon privilege of naming his own field officers.

Retaining still his prepossessions in favour of a military life, and believing that he might now reenter the service without disgrace, he cheerfully accepted the appointment offered him by his country.

Having made all the necessary arrangements for the recruiting service, he set out himself to visit the posts, and organize the remaining troops of Virginia, who were dispersed in small parties over an extensive frontier. These posts were put in the best state of defence they would admit of, particularly by cutting down and removing the trees which might cover an enemy attacking them. Having performed this duty, he set out for Williamsburg, in order to arrange with the lieutenant-governor the future

future plan of operations; and to impress, as well on him as on the leading men of the colony, the vast importance of devising proper means to retain the few Indians not yet detached from the interest of the English by the French; the necessity of a more effectual militia law; and of an act to establish a complete system of martial law among the troops in the regular service. While on the way, he was overtaken below Fredericksburg by an express, with the intelligence that a large number of French and Indians, divided, as was their custom, into several parties, had broken up the back settlements; were murdering and capturing men, women, and children; burning their houses, and destroying their crops. The troops stationed among them for their protection were unequal to that duty; and, instead of being able to afford the aid expected from them, were themselves blocked up in their forts. Colonel Washington hastened back to Winchester, where he found the utmost confusion and alarm prevailing. He endeavoured to raise the militia, and to lead them immediately against the enemy: but more attentive to their particular situation than the general danger, they could not be prevailed on to leave their families. The back inhabitants, instead of assembling in arms, and obtaining safety by meeting the enemy, fled into the lower country, and increased the general terror. In this state of things he endeavoured to collect and arm the men who had abandon-

abandoned their houses, and removed their wives and children to a distance from the scene of desolation and carnage exhibited on the frontiers: he gave too the most pressing orders to the newly appointed officers, of whose inattention to duty he greatly complained, to hasten their recruits; and directed the county-lieutenants below the Blue Ridge to order their militia immediately to Winchester; but before these orders could be executed, the party which had done so much mischief, and excited such alarm, recrossed the Aleghany mountains with impunity. The commander in chief, who was under the necessity of attending personally to every department, was for some time incessantly employed in making the most judicious disposition of the recruits for the protection of the country, in obtaining for the necessary supplies, and in establishing the general principles of discipline—especially the necessity of an exact obedience of orders.

Early in the ensuing spring the enemy, invited by the success of the preceding year, made another irruption into the inhabited country, and did great mischief. The number of troops on the regular establishment was totally insufficient for the protection of the frontier, and it was found impracticable to obtain effective service from the militia. The Indians, divided into small parties, concealed themselves with so much dexterity as seldom to be perceived till the blow was struck. Their murders were frequent-

frequently committed in the very neighbourhood of the forts; and the detachments from the garrisons, which were employed in scouring the country, were generally eluded, or attacked to advantage. In one of these skirmishes immediately in the neighbourhood of a stockade, the Americans were totally routed, and Captain Mercer killed. Such was the confidence of the enemy, that the smaller forts were very frequently assaulted, and they had repeated skirmishes* with such scouting parties as they fell in with. The people either abandoned the country, or attempted to secure themselves in small stockade forts, where they were in great distress for provisions, arms, and ammunition; were often surrounded, and sometimes cut off. With this state of things, Colonel Washington was deeply affected. "I see their situation," said he in a letter to the lieutenant-governor, "know their danger, and participate in their sufferings, without having it in my power to give them further relief than uncertain promises.

* In one of these skirmishes M. Donville, an ensign in the French service, was killed, and in his pocket were found the orders given him by Dumas, the commandant on the Ohio, in which he was directed to pass Fort Cumberland, to harass the convoys; and, if possible, to burn the magazines at Conogagee.—To the honour of Dumas, particular instructions were given, to restrain the Indians, as far as should be in his power, from murdering those who should fall into their hands. Unfortunately, obedience to such orders could seldom be enforced.

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In short, I see inevitable destruction in so clear a light, that, unless vigorous measures are taken by the Assembly, and speedy assistance sent from below, the poor inhabitants now in forts must unavoidably fall, while the remainder are flying before the barbarous foe. In fine, the melancholy situation of the people, the little prospect of assistance, the gross and scandalous abuses cast upon the officers in general, which is reflecting on me in particular, for suffering misconduct of such extraordinary kind; and the distant prospect, if any, of gaining reputation in the service, cause me to lament the hour that gave me a commission, and would induce me, at any other time than this of imminent danger, to resign, without one hesitating moment, a command, from which I never expect to reap either honour or benefit:—but, on the contrary, have almost an absolute certainty of incurring displeasure below, while the murder of helpless families may be laid to my account here.

"The supplicating tears of the women, and moving petitions of the men, melt me with such deadly sorrow, that I solemnly declare, if I know my own mind, I could offer myself a willing sacrifice to the butchering enemy, provided that would contribute to the people's ease."

Colonel Washington had been prevented from taking post at Fort Cumberland, the extreme position towards the enemy held by the Americans, where the largest number of troops were stationed,

by an unfortunate and extraordinary difficulty, growing out of an obscurity in the royal orders, respecting the relative rank of officers commissioned by the king, and those commissioned by his governor. A Captain Dagworthy, who was at that place, and of the former description, insisted on taking the command, although it had been committed to Lieutenant-colonel Stevens; and, on the same principle, contested the rank of Colonel Washington also. He was at this distressing time at Winchester, where there were public stores to a considerable amount with only about fifty men to guard them. A council of war was called, to determine whether he should, at the head of this small body, march to some of the nearest forts, and, uniting with their petty garrisons, risk an action with the enemy, or wait till the militia could be raised. It was unanimously advised to continue at Winchester, to protect the public stores and the inhabitants of that place. Lord Fairfax, who commanded the militia of that and the adjacent counties, had ordered them to his assistance; but they were slow in turning out, and he complained that three days' unremitting exertion in Frederick could only produce twenty men.

The incompetency of the military force to the defence of the country had become so obvious, that the Assembly determined to augment the regiment to fifteen hundred men, by adding to the number of privates in each company: and, as it had become apparently

apparently impracticable to complete it by voluntary enlistment, orders were given to draft the men required out of the militia, and that the drafts should serve till the following December.

Colonel Washington urged strongly on the House of Burgesses, in a letter addressed to their Speaker, the necessity of increasing the regiment still further to two thousand men, a less number than which could not possibly, in his opinion, be sufficient to cover the very extensive frontier of Virginia, if the present defensive system should be adhered to; and he expressed his apprehensions that, without artillery and engineers, or assistance from Britain or the neighbouring colonies, they would be unable to act offensively, and to drive the French from Fort du Quesne, which was said to be regularly fortified. To demonstrate the truth of the proposition, that less than two thousand men could afford no real protection to the country he drew a picture of their actual situation, and stated the number of men that would be necessary to garrison the chain of forts, which must be indispensably kept up, so long as the French maintained their position on the Ohio. In making this statement, he observed that, with the exception of a few inhabitants forted in on the south branch of Potomack, the North Mountain, near Winchester, had become the frontier; and that, without effectual aid, the inhabitants would even pass the Blue Ridge. He also recommended a fort at Winchester; and that the regiment should be

organized into two battalions, to consist of ten companies of one hundred men each. His propositions, except that for increasing the regiment to two thousand men, were generally acceded to. In this letter he observed, that the woods seemed "alive with French and Indians;" and again described so feelingly the situation of the inhabitants, that the Assembly requested the Governor to order out half the militia of the adjoining counties to their relief: and the Attorney-general, Mr. Peyton Randolph, formed a company of one hundred gentlemen, who engaged as volunteers to make the campaign. Ten well-trained woodmen or Indians would have rendered more service.

The distress of the country increased. Winchester, as had been foreseen, became almost the only settlement on the northern frontier beyond the Blue Ridge; and fears were entertained that the enemy would soon pass even these mountains and ravage the country below them. Express after express was sent to hasten the militia, but sent in vain. At length, laden with plunder, prisoners, and scalps, the French and their savage allies returned, about the last of April, to Fort Du Quesne.

Some short time after the retreat of the enemy the militia appeared, and strengthened the different posts. The country was now searched, and the best dispositions made to repel another invasion. The fort at Winchester was commenced; which, in honour

honour of the general who was ordered to take the command of the British troops in America, was called Fort Loudoun; and the perpetual remonstrances of Colonel Washington to the Assembly were at length so far successful, that the laws for the government of its forces were rendered rather more efficient.

Instead of adopting, in the first instance, that military code which experience had matured, occasional acts were made to remedy particular evils as they occurred; in consequence of which, a state of insubordination was greatly protracted, and the difficulties of the commanding officer increased. Slight penalties were at first annexed to very serious military offences; and when at length an act was obtained to punish mutiny and desertion with death, such crimes as cowardice in action, and sleeping on a post, were omitted to be inserted. It was left impossible to hold a general court-martial without an order from the Governor; and the commanding officer was not at liberty to make those arrangements which his own observations suggested, but was shackled by the controul of those who could neither judge as correctly, nor be as well informed, as himself.

These errors of a government totally unused to war, were gradually but not entirely corrected.

The militia were retained in service till harvest, and then discharged. Successive incursions into the country were made by small predatory parties of

French and Indians, who murdered the defenceless wherever found, and kept up a continual alarm. In Pennsylvania the inhabitants were driven as far as Carlisle; and in Maryland, Fredericktown on the eastern side of the Blue Ridge became a frontier. With all the exertions which had been made, the Virginia regiment did not yet amount to one thousand men; and with this small force, aided occasionally by militia, Colonel Washington was to defend a frontier nearly four hundred miles in extent, and to complete a chain of forts which might conduce to that object. He repeatedly urged the necessity and propriety of abandoning Fort Cumberland, which was too far in advance of the settlements, and too far north to be useful; while it required for its defence a larger portion of his force than could be spared, with a proper regard to the safety of other more advantageous positions. The Governor, however, thought it improper to abandon it, since it was a *king's fort*; and Lord Loudoun, on being consulted, gave the same opinion.

Among subjects of extreme chagrin to the commander of the Virginia troops, was the practice of desertion. It had become very prevalent, and was in a considerable degree ascribed to the too great and ill-judged parsimony of the Assembly. Only eightpence per day was allowed to the soldiers, out of which twopence was stopped for clothes. This pay was inferior to what was allowed on every other part of the continent; and, as ought to have been

been foreseen, great discontents were excited by a distinction so very invidious. The remonstrances of the commanding officer, who possessed great and deserved influence, at length, in some degree, corrected this mischief, and a full suit of regimentals was allowed, without deducting its price from the daily pay of the soldier.

This campaign furnished no event which can interest the reader, or adorn the page of history: yet the duties of the officer, though minute, were arduous; and the sufferings of the people beyond measure afflicting. It adds one to the many evidences which have been afforded of the miseries to be suffered by those who defer preparing the means of defence till the moment when they ought to be efficiently used; and, then, rely almost entirely on a force neither adequate to the danger nor of equal continuance with it.

It is also an interesting fact to those who know the present situation of Virginia, and the active force she could now employ, that so lately as in the year 1756 the Blue Ridge had become her frontier, and that she found immense difficulty in completing a single regiment to protect the inhabitants from the horrors of the scalping-knife, and the still greater horrors of being led into captivity by Indians, who too often inflicted death by torture.

So soon as the main body of the enemy had withdrawn from the settlements, a tour was made by Colonel Washington to the south-western frontier,

in order to examine, in person, the state of things in that quarter. There, as well as to the north, continual incursions were made, and murders committed; and there, too, the principal defence of the country was intrusted to an ill-regulated militia. The fatal consequences of this system are thus stated by him in a letter to the Lieutenant-governor: "The inhabitants are so sensible of their danger, if left to the protection of these people, that not a man will stay at his place. This I have from their own mouths, and the principal inhabitants of Augusta county. The militia are under such bad order and discipline, that they will come and go when and where they please, without regarding time, their officers, or the safety of the inhabitants; but consulting solely their own inclinations. There should be, according to your honour's orders, one third of the militia of these parts on duty at a time. Instead of that, scarce one-thirtieth is out. They are to be relieved every month, and they are a great part of that time marching to and from their stations; and they will not wait one day longer than the limited time, whether relieved or not, however urgent the necessity for their continuance may be." Some instances of this, and of gross misbehaviour, were then enumerated; after which he pressed the necessity of increasing the number of regulars to two thousand men.

After returning from this tour to Winchester, he gave the Lieutenant-governor a statement of the situation

situation in which he found the country, which ought not to be omitted. "From Fort Trial," said he, "on Smith's River, I returned to Fort William on the Catawba, where I met Colonel Buchannan with about thirty men, chiefly officers, to conduct me up Jackson's River along the range of forts. With this small company of irregulars, with whom order, regularity, circumspection, and vigilance, were matters of derision and contempt, we set out, and, by the protection of Providence, reached Augusta Court-house in seven days, without meeting the enemy; otherwise we must have been sacrificed by the indiscretion of these hooping, hallooing, gentlemen soldiers. This *jaunt* afforded me great opportunity of seeing the bad regulation of the militia, the disorderly proceedings of the garrisons, and the unhappy circumstances of the inhabitants.

"First, of the militia.—The difficulty of collecting them on an emergency whatever, I have spoken of as grievous; and appeal to sad experience, both in this and other countries, to attest how great a disadvantage it is; the enemy having every opportunity to plunder, kill, and escape, before they can afford any assistance. And, not to mention the general expensiveness of their service, I can instance several cases where a captain, lieutenant, and, I may add, an ensign, with two or three sergeants, have gone upon duty with only six or eight men. The proportion of expense in the case is so unjust and obvious, that your honour cannot want

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it to be proved. Then, these men, when raised, are to be continued only one month on duty, half of which time is lost in marching out and returning. Those from the adjacent counties especially, must be on duty some time before they reach their stations. By these means double sets of men are in pay at the same time, and for the same service.

"Again:—the waste of provisions they make is unaccountable. No method or order is observed in serving it out to them, or in purchasing it at the best rates; but quite the reverse. Allowance to each man, as to other soldiers, they look upon as the highest indignity; and would sooner starve than carry a few days provisions on their backs for convenience: but upon their march, when breakfast is wanted, they knock down the first ox, or other animal they meet with, and, after regaling upon it, march on till dinner, when they take the same method, and so for supper likewise, to the great oppression of the people. Or, if they chance to impress cattle for provision, the valuation is left to neighbours, who have themselves suffered by these practices, and, despairing of their pay, exact high prices. Thus the public is imposed upon at all events.

"I might add, I believe, that for the want of proper laws to govern the militia, for I cannot ascribe it to any other cause, they are obſtinate, self-willed, perverse, of little or no service to the people, and very burthensome to the cōuntry.

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Every mean individual has his own crude notion of things, and must undertake to direct. If his advice be neglected, he thinks himself slighted, abased, and injured, and, to redress his wrongs, will depart for his home.

"These, Sir, are literally matters of fact, partly from persons of undoubted veracity, but chiefly from my own observations.

"Secondly, concerning the garrisons.—I found them very weak from want of men, but more so from indolence and irregularity. I saw none in a posture of defence, and few that might not be surprised with the greatest ease. An instance of this appeared at Dickenson's Fort, where the Indians ran down, caught several children that were playing under the walls, and had got to the gate before they were discovered. Was not Vass's Fort surprised, and a good many souls lost in the same manner? They keep no guards but just when the enemy is about, and they are under fearful apprehensions of them; nor ever stir out of the forts, from the time they reach them, till relieved at the expiration of their month; at which time they march off, be the consequence what it may. So that the enemy may ravage the country, and they not the wiser. Of the ammunition they are as careless as of the provisions, firing it away frequently at targets for wagers. On our journey, as we approached one of the forts, we heard a quick fire for several minutes; and, concluding

cluding certainly that they were attacked, we marched in the best manner to their relief: but when we came up we found them diverting themselves at marks. These men afford no assistance to the unhappy settlers driven from their plantations, either in securing their harvest or gathering their corn. Of the many ports I passed by, there was but one or two where the captain was at his post.

They were generally absent on their own business, and had given leave to several of their men to be absent likewise: yet these persons, I will venture to say, will charge the country their full month's pay.

"Thirdly, the wretched and unhappy situation of the inhabitants need but few words, after a slight reflection on the preceding circumstances, which, without speedy redress, must necessarily draw after them very melancholy consequences. They are truly sensible of their misery. They feel their insecurity whilst depending upon militia, who are slow in coming to their assistance, indifferent about their preservation, unwilling to continue, and regardless of every thing but their own ease. In short, they are so affected by approaching ruin, that the whole back country is in a general motion towards the southern colonies; and I expect that scarcely a family will inhabit Frederick, Hampshire, or Augusta, in a little time. They petitioned me in the most earnest manner for companies of the regiment; but, alas! it is not in my power to furnish

nish them with any, without leaving this dangerous quarter more exposed than they are. I promised, at their particular request, to address your Honour and the Assembly on their behalf, and to solicit that a regular force may be established in lieu of the militia and ranging companies, which are of much less service, and infinitely more expensive to the country."

Colonel Washington had become so sensible of the absolute impracticability of defending such an extensive frontier, as to be extremely anxious to be enabled to act on the offensive. His opinions now were decided, that the people of Virginia could only be protected by entering the country of the enemy, by giving him employment at home, and removing, if possible, the source of all their calamities, by driving the French from Fort du Quesne. While they held that post, the great Indian force they were enabled by their ascendancy over these people to bring into action, would always put in their power to annoy and infinitely to distress the frontiers; perhaps indeed to acquire the possession of the whole country to the Blue Ridge. It was now, therefore, the object nearest his heart, to stimulate the Assembly to such exertions as would, with some aid from the commander in chief of all his Majesty's troops in America, bring into the field a sufficient force to warrant an expedition against Fort du Quesne.

"As defensive measures," he observed in a letter to

to the Lieutenant-governor, "are evidently insufficient for the security and safety of the country, I hope no arguments are necessary to evince the necessity of altering them to a vigorous offensive war, in order to remove the cause." But in the event that the Assembly should still indulge that favourite scheme of protecting the inhabitants by forts along the frontiers, he presented to the Governor a plan, which he recommended for his approbation, and which in its execution required two thousand men. These were to be distributed in twenty-two forts, extending from the river Mayo to the Potowmack, in a line of three hundred and sixty miles. In a letter written about the same time to the Speaker of the Assembly, he urged with great force the objections to a reliance on the militia, even if the present defensive system should be persevered in; but he gave his unequivocal preference to more vigorous measures. "The certainty of advantage," said he, "by an offensive scheme of action, renders it beyond any doubt much preferable to our defensive measures. To prove this to you, Sir, requires, I presume, no arguments. Our scattered force, so separated and dispersed in weak parties, avails little to stop the secret incursions of the savages. We can only, perhaps, put them to flight, or frighten them to some other part of the country; which answers not the end proposed. Whereas, had we strength enough to invade their lands, and assault their towns, we should restrain them

them from coming abroad, and leaving their families exposed. We should then remove the principal cause, and have stronger probability of success; we should be free from the many alarms, mischiefs, and murders, that now attend us; we should inspirit the hearts of our few Indian friends, and gain more esteem with them. In short, could Pennsylvania and Maryland be induced to join us in an expedition of this nature, and to petition his excellency Lord Loudoun for a small train of artillery, with some engineers, we should then be able, in all human probability, to subdue the terror of Fort du Quesne, retrieve our character with the Indians, and restore peace to our unhappy frontiers."

In the apprehension, however, that this favourite scheme would not be adopted, he recommended, by a variety of arguments and observations manifesting its propriety, the same plan of defence which had been submitted to the Lieutenant-governor.

The total inability of Colonel Washington to act offensively against the enemy, or even to afford protection to the frontiers of Virginia, was not the only distressing and vexatious circumstance attending his situation. The Lieutenant-governor, to whose commands he was in every minute circumstance subjected, and who seems to have been a weak, obstinate, and rude man, without just conceptions of the situation or real interests of the colony, frequently deranged his systems by orders which could

not be executed without considerable hazard and inconvenience.

He could not always restrain his chagrin at such occasions; and on one of them he observed, in a letter to an intimate friend, and a person of great influence—"Whence it arises, or why, I am truly ignorant, but my strongest representations of matters relative to the peace of the frontiers are disregarded as idle and frivolous; my propositions and measures partial and selfish; and all my sincerest endeavours for the service of my country perverted to the worst purposes. My orders are dark, doubtful, and uncertain. To-day approved, to-morrow condemned; left to act and proceed at hazard; accountable for the consequences, and blamed without the benefit of defence. If you can think my situation capable of exciting the smallest degree of envy, or of affording the least satisfaction, the truth is yet hid from you, and you entertain notions very different from the reality of the case. However, I am determined to bear up under all these embarrassments some time longer, in the hope of better regulations under Lord Loudoun, to whom I look for the future fate of Virginia."

Not long after this letter was written, Lord Loudoun arrived in Virginia; and in addition to his character as commander in chief, he was clothed with the highest civil authority, having been appointed governor of the colony. A complimentary address from the regiment, stating their pleasure

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at his arrival and appointment, and the readiness with which they would execute his commands, was presented to him; and a very comprehensive statement of the situation of the colony in a military point of view, and of the regiment in particular, was drawn up and submitted to him by Colonel Washington. In this he enumerated the errors which had prevented the completion of his regiment; shewed the insufficiency of the militia, and demonstrated the superiority of an offensive over the defensive system which had been pursued. After stating the particular situation of the forts, he proceeded—"It will evidently appear from the whole tenor of my conduct, but more especially from my reiterated representations, how strongly I have urged the Governor and Assembly to pursue different measures, and laboured to convince them, by all the reasoning I was capable of offering, of the impossibility of covering so extensive a frontier from Indian excursions, without more force than Virginia can maintain. I have endeavoured to demonstrate that it would require fewer men to remove the cause, than to prevent the effects while the cause exists."

Proceeding then to state the services of his regiment, he added, that under the disadvantageous restraints which had been enumerated, he must be permitted to observe, that the regiment had not been inactive. "On the contrary," he said, "it has performed a vast deal of work, and has been

very alert in defending the people; which will appear by observing that, notwithstanding we are more contiguous to the French and their Indian allies, and more exposed to their frequent incursions, than any of the neighbouring colonies, we have not lost half the inhabitants which others have done, but considerably more soldiers in their defence. For in the course of this campaign (since March I mean, as we have had but one constant campaign, one continued scene of action since we first entered the service) our troops have been engaged in upwards of twenty skirmishes, and we have had near one hundred men killed and wounded."

After condemning the ill-judged economy shewn in raising men, he proceeded thus to describe the prevailing temper of the day, a temper by no means peculiar to that particular era. "We are either insensible of danger till it breaks upon our heads, or else, through mistaken notions of economy, evade the expence till the blow is struck, and then run into an extreme of raising militia. These, after an age, as it were, is spent in assembling them, come up, make a noise for a time, oppress the inhabitants, and then return, leaving the frontiers unguarded as before. This is still our reliance, notwithstanding former experience convinces us, if reason did not, that the French and Indians are watching the opportunity when we shall be lulled into fatal security, and unprepared to resist an attack to invade the country, and by ravaging one part terrify another; that they retreat when our militia

militia assemble, and repeat the stroke as soon as they are dispersed; that they send down parties in the intermediate time to discover our motions, procure intelligence, and sometimes divert the troops. Such an invasion we may expect in March, if measures to prevent it are neglected as they hitherto have been.

This statement was probably presented by Colonel Washington in person, who was permitted during the winter to visit Lord Loudoun in Philadelphia; where that nobleman met the Governors of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and North Carolina, and the Lieutenant-governor of Virginia, in order to consult with them on the measures to be taken in their respective provinces for the ensuing campaign. He was, however, disappointed in his favourite hope of being enabled to act offensively against the French on the Ohio. Lord Loudoun had determined to direct all his efforts against the enemy in the northern parts of the continent, and to leave in aid of the middle and southern colonies only twelve hundred men. Instead of receiving assistance, Virginia was required to send four hundred men to the aid of South Carolina: yet Colonel Washington continued indefatigable in his endeavours to impress on Mr. Dinwiddie, and on the Assembly, the importance of revising and properly modifying their military code, which had now expired, of making a more efficient militia law, and of increasing their number of regular troops.

So far from succeeding on the last subject, he had the mortification to witness a measure which completely crushed his hopes of an efficient regular force. Being unable to complete the regiment according to its late establishment by voluntary enlistment, the Assembly changed its organization, and reduced it to ten companies, each to consist of one hundred men: yet his anxious wishes continued to be directed towards Fort du Quesne, which he very justly considered as the source from whence had flowed all the miseries with which his distressed country had been deluged. He still laboured to impress on the officer commanding the British troops, opinions he deemed so essential to the proper conduct of the war, as well as the safety of his own country. In a letter written about this time to Colonel Stanwix, who commanded in the middle colonies, he says: "You will excuse me, Sir, for saying that I think there never was, and perhaps never again will be, so favourable an opportunity as the present for reducing Fort du Quesne. Several prisoners have made their escape from the Ohio this spring, and agree in their accounts that there are but three hundred men left in the garrison; and I do not conceive that the French are so strong in Canada as to reinforce this place, and defend themselves at home this campaign. Surely then this is too precious an opportunity to be lost."

But Mr. Pitt, although minister from November 1756 to April 1757, did not yet direct the councils

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of Britain, and the spirit of enterprise and heroism had not yet animated her generals. The campaign to the north was inglorious, and to the westward nothing was even attempted which might relieve the middle colonies.

The pressure on Canada did not equal the hopes which had been entertained on that subject, and consequently its effects were not such as to prevent the French from reinforcing their forts on the Ohio. Some prisoners, taken in a skirmish on Turtle Creek, gave the information that the garrison of Fort du Quesne now consisted of six hundred French and three hundred Indians.

Large bodies of savages, independent of the garrison, were in the service of France, and in the course of this campaign once more spread desolation and murder over the whole country west of the Blue Ridge. The utmost possible exertions were made by the Virginia regiment to protect the inhabitants, but it was impossible. The force was inadequate to the object; and it became every day more and more apparent, that this defensive mode of conducting the war, by covering an immense frontier with a small scattered regular force and occasional aid from the militia, was most injudiciously chosen. Vast numbers of the people were killed, and the parties sent out to fight the enemy were often overpowered. "I exert every means," says Colonel Washington to Governor Dinwiddie, "to protect a much distressed country; but it is a task too arduous!

ous! To think of defending a frontier of more than three hundred and fifty miles extent, as ours is, with only seven hundred men, is vain and idle, especially when that frontier lies more contiguous to the enemy than any other.

"I am, and have for a long time been, fully convinced that, if we continue to pursue a defensive plan, the country must be inevitably lost."

In another letter to the Lieutenant-governor, he says, "The raising a company of rangers, or augmenting our strength in some other manner, is so far necessary, that without it the remaining inhabitants of this once fertile and populous valley will scarcely be detained at their dwellings till the spring. And if there is no expedition to the westward then, nor a force more considerable than Virginia can support posted on our frontiers; if we still adhere for the next campaign to our destructive defensive schemes, there will not, I dare affirm, be one soul living on this side the Blue Ridge the ensuing autumn, if we except the troops in garrison, and a few inhabitants of this town who may shelter themselves under the protection of this fort. This I know to be the immoveable determination of all the settlers of this country."

In a letter to the Speaker of the Assembly, he gave the same opinion, and added, "I do not know on whom these miserable undone people are to rely for protection. If the Assembly are to give it to them, it is time that measures were at least concerting,

ing, and not when they ought to be going into execution, as has always been the case. If they are to seek it from the Commander in Chief, it is time their condition was made known to him. For I cannot forbear repeating again, that while we pursue defensive measures, we pursue inevitable ruin; the loss of the country being the inevitable and fatal consequence of them. There will be no end to our troubles, while we follow this plan, and every year will increase our expense. It is not possible for me to convey a just sense of the posture of our affairs; it would be vanity to attempt it. I therefore content myself with entreating you to use your influence to prevent such delays as we have hitherto met with, if you think this affair depends on the Assembly. If you think the Assembly have done all in their power, and that recourse must be had elsewhere, I am determined, as I will neither spare cost or pains, to apply to Colonel Stanwix, who commands in this quarter, with whom I am acquainted, and from whom I have received several kind and affectionate letters, for leave to wait on him with an account of our circumstances. Through this means, perhaps, we may be able to draw a little of Lord Loudoun's attention to the preservation of these colonies." Again, writing to the Lieutenant-governor, he says, "The last alarm occasioned a great many of the inhabitants of this country to go off; vast numbers are still moving. I fear that in a short time this very valuable valley will be in a great mea-

sure depopulated. I am quite at a loss to devise what further steps to take, and how to obviate so great a misfortune, as I have hitherto neglected nothing in the compass of my power. It is very evident that nothing but vigorous offensive measures next campaign can save the country, at least all west of the Blue Ridge, from inevitable desolation."

It was impossible for Colonel Washington, zealous as he was in the service of his country, and ambitious as he was of military fame, to observe the errors committed in the conduct of the war, without censuring and complaining of them. These errors were not confined to the arrangements respecting the military force of the colony. The Cherokees and Catawba Indians had hitherto remained faithful to the English, and it was extremely desireable to engage the warriors of those tribes heartily in their service. Yet so miserably was this business conducted, that, though a considerable expense was incurred, very little assistance was obtained, and very great disgust excited among them. The freedom with which Colonel Washington censured the measures adopted, gave offence to the Governor, who considered the censures as manifesting a want of respect for himself. He sometimes coarsely termed them impertinent, and at others charged him with looseness in his information, and inattention to his duty. On one of these occasions Colonel Washington thus concluded a letter of detail: "Nothing remarkable has happened, and therefore I have nothing

nothing to add. I must beg leave, however, before I conclude, to observe in justification of my own conduct, that it is with pleasure I receive reproof when reproof is due, becau e no person can be readier to accuse me than I am to acknowledge an error when I have committed it; nor more desirous of atoning for a crime when I am sens'ble of being guilty of one. But, on the other hand, it is with con ern I remark, that my best endeavours lose their reward, and that my conduct, although I have uniformly studied to make it as unexceptionable as I could, does not appear to you in a favourable point of view. Otherwise, your Honour would not have accused me of *loose* behaviour, and *remissness* of duty, in matters where, I think, I have rather exceed. d than fallen short of it. This, I think, is evidently the case in speaking of Indian affairs at all, after being instructed in very express terms, '*not to have any concern with, or management of, Indian affairs.*' This has induced me to forbear mentioning the Indians in my letters to your Honour of late, and to leave the misunderstanding which you speak of, between Mr. Atkin and them, to be related by him."

Not long after this, he received a letter informing him of some coarse calumny reflecting on his veracity and his honour, which had been circulated and repor ed to the Governor. A copy of this le ter he enclosed to Mr. Dinwiddie, and thus addressed him: "I should take it infinitely kind, if your Honour

Honour would please to inform me, whether a report of this nature was ever made to you, and, in that case, who was the author of it?

"It is evident, from a variety of circumstances, and especially from the change in your Honour's conduct towards me, that some person as well inclined to detract, but better skilled in the art of detraction than the author of the above stupid scandal, has made free with my character. For I cannot suppose that malice so absurd, so barefaced, so diametrically opposite to truth, to common policy, and in short to every thing but villany, as the above is, could impress you with so ill an opinion of my honour and honesty.

"If it be possible that Colonel ———, for my belief is staggered, not being conscious of having given the least cause to any one, much less to that gentleman, to reflect so grossly; I say, if it be possible that ——— could descend so low as to be the propagator of this story, he must either be vastly ignorant of the state of affairs in this country at *that time*, or else he must suppose that the whole body of inhabitants, had combined with me in executing the deceitful fraud; or why did they, almost to a man, forsake their dwellings in the greatest terror and confusion? and why, while one half of them sought shelter in paltry forts (of their own building) did the other flee to the adjacent counties for refuge; numbers of them even to Carolina, from whence they have never returned?

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"These are facts well known, but not better known than that these wretched people, while they lay pent up in forts, destitute of the common supports of life (having in their precipitate flight forgotten, or being unable rather to secure any kind of necessaries), did dispatch messengers of their own (thinking I had not represented their miseries in the piteous manner they deserved) with addresses to your Honour and the Assembly, praying relief. And did I ever send any alarming account, without sending also the original papers (or the copies) which gave rise to it?

"That I have foibles, and perhaps many of them, I shall not deny; I should esteem myself, as the world also would, vain and empty, were I to arrogate perfection.

"Knowledge in military matters is to be acquired by practice and experience only: and if I have erred, great allowance should be made for my errors for want of them, unless those errors should appear to be wilful; and then I conceive it will be more generous to charge me with my faults, and let me stand or fall according to evidence, than to stigmatize me behind my back.

"It is uncertain in what light my services may have appeared to your Honour; but this I know, and it is the highest consolation I am capable of feeling, that no man that ever was employed in a public capacity has endeavoured to discharge the trust reposed in him with greater honesty, and

more zeal for the country's interest, than I have done, and if there is any person living who can say with justice that I have offered any intentional wrong to the public, I will cheerfully submit to the most ignominious punishment that an injured people ought to inflict. On the other hand, it is hard to have my character arraigned, and my actions condemned, without a hearing.

" I must therefore again beg, in *more plain* and in *very earnest* terms, to know if ——— has taken the liberty of representing my conduct to your Honour with such ungentlemanly freedom as the letter implies? Your condescension herein will be acknowledged a singular favour."

In a letter some short time after this to the Lieutenant-governor, he says, " I don't know that I ever gave your Honour cause to suspect me of ingratitude —a crime I detest, and would most carefully avoid. If an open disinterested behaviour carries offence, I may have offended; for I have all along laid it down as a maxim, to represent facts freely and impartially; but not more so to others, than to you, Sir. If instances of my ungrateful behaviour had been particularized, I would have answered them. But I have long been convinced that my actions and their motives have been maliciously aggravated."

In this letter he solicited (as the Lieutenant-governor was to leave the province in November) permission to come to Williamsburgh, since he had some accounts to settle which he was desirous of adjusting.

justing. This permission the Governor refused in abrupt and disobliging terms, telling him that he had frequently been indulged, and ought not now to ask for leave of absence.

In answer to this letter, Colonel Washington, after stating the immoveable determination of the inhabitants to leave the country, unless more efficiently protected, added, "To give a more succinct account of their affairs, than I could in writing, was the principal, among many other reasons, that induced me to ask leave to come down. It was not to enjoy a party of pleasure that I wished leave of absence; I have been indulged with few of these winter or summer."

Mr. Dinwiddie soon afterwards took leave of Virginia, and the government devolved on Mr. Blair, the president of the council. Between him and the commander of the colonial forces the utmost cordiality continued to exist.

After the close of this campaign, Lord Loudoun returned to England, and General Abercrombie succeeded to the command of the army. The department of the middle and southern provinces was committed to General Forbes; and, to the inexpressible gratification of Colonel Washington, an expedition against Fort du Quesne was determined on.

Finding there was no probability of being placed on a permanent establishment, he had for some time past meditated a resignation of his commission; but the

the prospect of more active service now determined him to hold it for the ensuing campaign.

The high estimation in which he was held by the officers who had served with him under General Braddock, several of whom were now in the army of General Forbes, led him to hope that he should be in some degree distinguished by the commander in chief, and placed in situations which would enable him to render essential service to his country, and at the same time to reap those laurels for which he had always panted.

He urged strongly an early campaign; and, among other motives to induce the utmost possible activity, he stated, that by delay they would lose a body of friendly Indians, who had collected at Winchester, during the month of April, to the amount of seven hundred men, and would, he apprehended, return to their homes, if they did not perceive a prospect of being soon employed. "In that event," he added, "no words can tell how much they will be missed."

Long before the troops assembled, a very large body of French and Indians broke into the country, and the wretched inhabitants were again exposed to the miseries which they had so often experienced. The county of Augusta was ravaged, and about sixty persons murdered. The attempts made to intercept those who committed the mischief were unsuccessful, and they recrossed the Alleghany with their plunder, prisoners, and scalps.

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At length orders were received to assemble the regiment at Winchester, and be in readiness to march in fifteen days; in consequence of which the recruiting parties were called in, and Colonel Washington made a journey to Williamsburgh, to obtain arms, ammunition, and clothing for his troops, as well as money to enable them to move. It is strange that, at this late season, these preparations were yet to be made; and it is not less strange, that the task should have been imposed on Colonel Washington, of urging the necessity of allowing to *his* regiment, which had performed so much severe duty, the same pay which was allowed to a second regiment voted the last session of Assembly, only for this campaign, and to be commanded by Colonel Bird.

The apprehensions which had been entertained of the impracticability of detaining the Indians, unless the campaign could be commenced early in the season, were well founded. Before a junction of the troops had been made, these savages became impatient to return to their homes; and finding that the expedition would yet be delayed a considerable time, they left the army with promises to rejoin it in the proper season. So sensible was Colonel Washington of their importance in the country through which the troops were to be conducted, that he strongly urged General Forbes to dispatch a confidential person to the Cherokee towns, in order to cultivate their good will, and to prevail on them to join him on his march. This he considered as very

practicable,

practicable, since he understood the General designed to move by slow and cautious steps, and to establish posts at certain intervals for the reception of stores, and as a cover in the event of being compelled to retreat. In support of this opinion, he stated to General Forbes his conviction that, in the country through which they were to pass, numbers would not secure victory; on the contrary, he was persuaded that an unwieldy body of troops, covering its convoys, might be successfully attacked on its march, and penetrated at various points by light unincumbered parties.

In pursuance of the orders which had been received, the Virginia troops moved in detachments from Winchester to Fort Cumberland, where they assembled early in July, and were employed in opening a road to Rays Town, where Colonel Bouquet was stationed. As they were continually harassed by small parties of the enemy, it was in contemplation to send a strong detachment over the Alleghany mountains, for the purpose of giving the enemy employment at home. This plan was laid aside in conformity with the advice of Colonel Washington, who observed that unquestionably a very large force must now be collected at Fort du Quesne, and that a strong detachment could not move without such a quantity of provisions as would prevent a secret march; in consequence of which, the enemy would meet them in full force, and probably defeat them. He advised rather to harass them

them with small parties, principally of Indians; and this advice was pursued.

It had been considered as certain, that the army would march by Braddock's road, which was well known, and required very few repairs. Late in July, Colonel Washington had the mortification to receive a letter from Colonel Bouquet, asking an interview with him, in order to consult on opening a new road from Rays Town, and requesting his opinion on that route. "I shall," says he, in answer to this letter, "most cheerfully work on any road, pursue any route, or enter upon any service that the general or yourself may think me usefully employed in, or qualified for, and shall never have a will of my own when a duty is required of me. But since you desire me to speak my sentiments freely, permit me to observe that, after having conversed with all the guides, and having been informed by others acquainted with the country, I am convinced that a road to be compared with General Braddock's, or indeed that will be fit for transportation even by pack-horses, cannot be made. I own I have no predilection for the route you have in contemplation for me."

A few days after this letter he had an interview with Colonel Bouquet, whom he found decided in favour of opening the new road. After their separation, Colonel Washington, with his permission, addressed to him a letter to be laid before General

Forbes, then indisposed at Carlisle, in which he stated his reasons against this measure.

Several years passed, he said, the Pennsylvanians and Virginians had opened a trade with the Indians on the Ohio, and had endeavoured to obviate the inconveniences arising from the excessive badness of the route. The Indians had been hired to explore the country, and find the best way; the result of which had been, that the preference had been universally given to the path by Willis's Creek, and the Pennsylvanians themselves had adopted it. It had been opened by the Ohio Company, in 1753, and repaired by the troops under his command, in 1754, as far as Gist's Plantation, beyond the Great Meadows. In 1755 it had been widened and put in good order by General Braddock, and could easily be made fit for immediate use. A road which had been so long opened, so well and so often repaired, must be superior to a new road, admitting the ground to be equal. But the great and decisive objection to this new route, was the want of time to open it. So much time must be consumed in surmounting the vast difficulties opposed by almost impassable mountains, covered with rocks and woods, as would blast their otherwise well-founded hopes of striking, this season, the long-wished-for and important blow. Its being deferred to another year would, he was morally certain, be productive of the most destructive consequences to the middle and southern colonies, who had now made a noble

effort

effort towards ending the calamities under which they had so long groaned, by granting supplies beyond their abilities. These funds would in a few months be exausted, and the troops disbanded. Their inability, added to the discouragement occasioned by such a disappointment, might prevent their making a similar effort for another season; and experience evinced, that expense and numbers must be increased in proportion to their delay.

The southern Indians had, from their ill success and inactivity, long viewed them with contempt, and had already committed hostilities on their frontiers. They waited only the result of the present campaign to unmask themselves completely, and such an addition to the strength of the enemy might terminate in the destruction of the colonies.

The flattering accounts of the forage on the Rays Town road could not but be exaggerated. It was agreed by all unprejudiced men, acquainted with the country, that the mountains on that road were still more inaccessible than on General Braddock's. They were barren on both roads, and between them were rich valleys affording great quantities of grass.

The objection made to Braddock's road on account of the high waters was not well founded. The Yohogany, which was the most rapid, and soonest filled, he had himself crossed with a body of troops, after more than thirty days of almost con-

stant rain. The Monongahela might be avoided, if necessary, by passing a defile.

The objections to the numerous defiles on General Braddock's road were equally applicable to the other road.

The difference in distance was extremely inconsiderable; and the advantage gained in that respect would admit of no comparison with the disadvantage of being compelled to open a new road, one hundred miles, over almost inaccessible mountains. Should this be attempted, he feared they would be able to do nothing more than to fortify some post on the other side of the mountains, and prepare for another campaign. This he prayed Heaven to avert, unless it should really be found impracticable, during the present, to prosecute with prudence the enterprise now in hand.

He was also opposed to the scheme which had been suggested, of dividing the army, and marching by the two different routes.

He objected to this measure; first, because it divided their strength, and put it absolutely out of the power of the columns to support each other on the march, since there neither was, nor could be, any communication between the roads.

Secondly, if the division should set out at the same time, and should make no deposits on the way, that marching by the road from Rays Town must arrive first, because unincumbered with waggons; and, if the enemy should be in force, would

be exposed even in their intrenchments to insult and hazard. If the enemy should not be strong enough for this, the whole body would have but little to fear from them, in whatever manner or by whatever road they might march.

Thirdly, if the division escorting the convoy should be directed to march first, they would risk almost every thing, and be ruined if any accident should befal the artillery and military stores; and, lastly, if they should advance on both roads by deposits, they must double their number of guards over the mountains, and distress themselves by victualling them at the places of deposit; in addition to which, they must lose the proposed advantage of stealing a march on the enemy.

Having stated these objections to the plan in contemplation, he then recommended an order of march by Braddock's road, which would bring the whole army before Fort du Quesne in thirty-four days, with a supply of provisions for eighty-six days.

He at the same time addressed a letter to Major Halket, aid of General Forbes, in which he says, "I am just returned from a conference held with Colonel Bouquet: I find him fixed, I think I may say unalterably fixed, to lead you a new way to the Ohio, through a road every inch of which is to be cut at this advanced season, when we have scarcely time left to tread the beaten track, universally confessed to be the best passage through the mountains.

"If Colonel Bouquet succeeds in this point with the general, all is lost indeed! Our enterprise is ruined, and we shall be stopped at the Laurel Hill this winter; but not to gather laurels, except of the kind which cover the mountains: the southern Indians, will turn against us, and these colonies will be desolated by such an accession to the enemy's strength. These must be the consequences of a miscarriage, and a miscarriage the almost necessary consequence of an attempt to march the army by this route."

Colonel Washington's remonstrances and arguments were, however, unavailing, and the new route was resolved on. His chagrin at this measure, and at the delays resulting from it, was extreme, and was expressed in most anxious letters to M. Fauquier, then Governor of Virginia, and to the Speaker of the House of Burgesses.

To the Speaker, from Fort Cumberland, he says, "We are still encamped here, very sickly and dispirited at the prospect before us. That appearance of glory which we once had in view; that hope, that laudable ambition of serving our country and meriting its applause, are now no more; all is dwindled into ease, sloth, and fatal inactivity. In a word, all is lost if the ways of men in power, like certain ways of Providence, are not inscrutable. But we, who view the actions of great men at a distance, can only form conjectures agreeably to a limited perception; and, being ignorant of the comprehensive schemes which

which may be in contemplation, might mistake egregiously in judging of things from appearances, or by the lump. Yet every f—l will have his notions, will prattle and talk away, and why may not I? We seem, hen, in my opinion, to act under the guidance of an evil genius. The conduct of our leaders, if not actuated by superior orders, is tempered with something I do not care to give a name to; nothing now but a miracle can bring this campaign to a happy issue." He then recapitulated the arguments he had urged against attempting a new road; and added, "But I spoke all unavailingly; the road was immediately begun, and, since then, from one to two thousand men have constantly wrought on it. By the last accounts I have received, they had cut it to the foot of the Laurel Hill, about thirty-five miles; and I suppose by this time fifteen hundred men have taken post about ten miles further, at a place called Loyal Hanna, where our next fort is to be constructed.

"We have certain intelligence that the French strength at Fort du Quesne did not exceed eight hundred men the thirteenth ultimo, including about three or four hundred Indians. See how our time has been mispent! behold how the golden opportunity is lost, perhaps never more to be regained! How is it to be accounted for? Can General Forbes have orders for this? Impossible. Will, then, our injured country pass by such abuses? I hope, not. Rather let a full representation of the matter go to

his Majesty; let him know how grossly his glory and interests, and the public money, have been prostituted."

Colonel Washington was soon afterwards ordered to Rays Town, before which time Major Grant had been detached from the advanced post at Loyal Hanna, with a select corps of eight hundred men, to reconnoitre the country about Fort du Quesne. In the night he reached a hill near the fort, where he posted his men in different columns, and sent forward a party for the purpose of discovery. They burnt a log-house near the walls, and returned. Next morning Major Grant detached Major Lewis of Colonel Washington's regiment, with a baggage-guard two miles into his rear, and sent an engineer with a covering party, within full view of the fort, to take a plan of the works. In the mean time he ordered the reveillie to be beaten in different places. This parade drew out the enemy in great force, and an obstinate engagement ensued. As soon as the action commenced, Major Lewis left Captain Bullet, of Colonel Washington's regiment, with about fifty Virginians to guard the baggage, and advanced with the utmost speed to support Major Grant. The English were defeated with considerable loss, and both Major Grant and Major Lewis taken prisoners. In this action the Virginians behaved most gallantly, and evidenced the spirit with which they had been trained. Out of eight officers, five were killed, a sixth wounded, and a seventh taken prisoner. Captain Bullet, who defended the baggage with great reso-

lution,

lution, and contributed to save the remnant of the detachment, was the only officer who escaped unhurt. Out of one hundred and sixty six men, sixty-two were killed on the spot, and two wounded. This conduct on the part of his regiment reflected high honour on their commander, as well as on themselves, and he received on the occasion the compliments of the general. The total loss in this action was two hundred and seventy-three killed, and forty-two wounded.

It was at length determined that the main body of the army should move from Rays Town, and the general called on the colonels of regiments, each to submit to his consideration a plan of his march. That proposed by Colonel Washington has been preserved, and appears to have been judiciously formed.

They reached the camp at Loyal Hanna through a road said to be indiscribably bad, about the fifth of November; where, as had been predicted, a council of war determined that it was unadvisable to proceed further this campaign. It would have been almost impossible to have wintered an army in that position, they must have retreated from the cold inhospitable wilderness into which they had penetrated, or have suffered immensely, perhaps have perished. Fortunately some prisoners were taken, who informed them of the extreme distress of the fort; the garrison, deriving no support from Canada, was weak, was in great want of provisions, and

and had been deserted by the Indians. These encouraging circumstances changed the resolution which had been taken, and determined the general to prosecute the expedition.

Colonel Washington was advanced in front, and with infinite labour superintended the opening of the way for the main body of the army. In this manner they moved forward with slow and painful steps till they reached Fort du Quesne; of which they took peaceable possession, the enemy having on the preceding night, after evacuating and setting it on fire, proceeded down the Ohio in their boats.

It is evident that the capture of this place, so all important to the middle and southern provinces, was entirely to be attributed to the British fleet, which had intercepted a considerable part of the reinforcements designed by France for her colonies, and to the success of the English and American arms, which rendered it impossible for the French in Canada to support it, and which very much weakened their influence over the Indians. Without the aid of these causes, the extraordinary and unaccountable delays of the campaign must have defeated its object.

The works were repaired, and the new fort was distinguished by the title of Fort Pitt, the name of the great minister who now, with so much vigour and talents, governed the nation.

Colonel Washington, having furnished two hundred

dred men from his regiment, as a garrison, marched to Winchester, from which place he set out soon afterwards to attend the Assembly, of which he had been elected a member by the county of Frederick, while at Fort Cumberland.

The removal of the French from the Ohio produced, in a great degree, a cessation of Indian hostility. His country was now relieved from the danger with which it had been threatened. The great object for which alone, after perceiving that he should not be placed on the permanent establishment, he had continued in the service, was now accomplished. His health was much impaired, and his domestic affairs required his attention.

Impelled by these and other motives of a private nature, he determined to withdraw from a service, which he believed he might now quit without dishonour; and, about the close of the year, he resigned his commission as colonel of the first Virginia regiment, and commander in chief of all the troops raised in the colony.

The officers whom he had commanded were greatly attached to him, and manifested their esteem for him, and their regret at parting with him, by a very affectionate address* expressive of the very high

* SIR,

We, your most obedient and affectionate officers, beg leave to express our great concern at the disagreeable news we have received

high opinion they entertained both of his military and private character.

This.

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ceived of your determination to resign the command of that corps in which we have under you long served.

The happiness we have enjoyed, and the honour we have acquired together, with the mutual regard that has always subsisted between you and your officers, have implanted so sensible an affection in the minds of us all, that we cannot be silent on this critical occasion.

In our earliest infancy you took us under your tuition, trained us up in the practice of that discipline which alone can constitute good troops, from the punctual observance of which you never suffered the least deviation.

Your steady adherence to impartial justice, your quick discernment and invariable regard to merit, wisely intended to inculcate those genuine sentiments of true honour and passion for glory, from which the greatest military atchievements have been derived, first heightened our natural emulation and our desire to excel. How much we improved by those regulations and your own example, with what alacrity we have hitherto discharged our duty, with what cheerfulness we have encountered the severest toils, especially while under your particular directions, we submit to yourself, and flatter ourselves that we have in a great measure answered your expectations.

Judge then how sensibly we must be affected with the loss of such an excellent commander, such a sincere friend, and so affable a companion. How rare is it to find those amiable qualifications blended together in one man! How great the loss of such a man! Adieu to that superiority which the enemy have granted us over other troops, and which even the regulars and provincials have done us the honour to acknowledge! Adieu to that strict discipline and order which you have always maintained! Adieu to that happy union and harmony which have been our principal cement.

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This opinion was not confined to the officers of his regiment; it was common to Virginia, and had been

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It gives us additional sorrow, when we reflect, to find our unhappy country will receive a loss no less irreparable than ourselves. Where will it meet a man so experienced in military affairs? one so renowned for patriotism, courage, and conduct? Who has so great a knowledge of the enemy we have to deal with? who so well acquainted with their situations and strength? who so much respected by the soldiery? who, in short, so able to support the military character of Virginia?

Your approved love to your king and country, and your uncommon perseverance in promoting the honour and true interest of the service, convince us that the most cogent reasons only could induce you to quit it. Yet we with the greatest deference presume to entreat you to suspend those thoughts for another year, and to lead us on to assist in the glorious work of extirpating our enemies, towards which so considerable advances have been made. In you we place the most implicit confidence; your presence only will cause a steady firmness and vigour to act in every breast, despising the greatest dangers, and thinking light of toils and hardships while led on by the man we know and love.

But if we must be so unhappy as to part; if the exigencies of your affairs force you to abandon us, we beg it as our last request, that you will recommend some person most capable to command, whose military knowledge, whose honour, whose conduct, and whose disinterested principles we may depend on.

Frankness, sincerity, and a certain openness of soul, are the true characteristics of an officer; and we flatter ourselves that you do not think us capable of saying any thing contrary to the purest dictates of our minds.

Fully persuaded of this, we beg leave to assure you, that, as you have hitherto been the actuating soul of our whole corps, we shall at

been adopted by the British officers with whom he served. The duties he performed, though not splendid, were arduous, and were executed with zeal and with judgment. The exact discipline he established in his regiment, when the temper of Virginia was extremely hostile to discipline, does credit to his military character; and the gallantry they displayed whenever called into action, manifests the spirit infused into them by their commander.

The difficulties of his situation, while unable to cover the frontiers from the French and Indians, who were spreading death and desolation in every quarter, were certainly great; and no better evidence of his exertions, under these distressing circumstances, can be given, than the undiminished confidence still placed in him by those he was unable to protect. The efforts to which he perpetually stimulated his country for the purpose of obtaining possession of the Ohio; the system for the conduct of the war which he continually recommended; the vigorous and active measures always advocated by him in his opinions to those by whom he was commanded; manifest an ardent and an enterprising mind, tempered by judgment and quickly improved by experience.

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at all times pay the most invariable regard to your will and pleasure, and will always be happy to demonstrate by our actions with how much respect and esteem we are, &c.

Not

Not long after his resignation he was married to the widow of Mr. Curtis, a lady to whom he had been for some time strongly attached, and who, to a large fortune and a fine person, added those amiable accomplishments which ensure domestic happiness, and fill with silent but unceasing felicity the quiet scenes of private life.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER II.

Opinions on the Supremacy of Parliament, and its Right to Tax the Colonies—Stamp Act—Congress assemble at New York—Violence in the Great Towns—Change of Administration—Stamp Act repealed—Opposition to the Mutiny Act—Act Imposing Duties on Tea, &c. resisted in America—The Assembly of Massachussets address Letters to several Members of the Administration in England—Petition to the King—Circular Letter to the Colonial Assemblies—Letter from the Earl of Hilsborough—Assembly of Massachussets dissolved—Seizure of the Sloop Liberty—A Convention assembles at Faneuil-hall, Boston—Moderation of its Proceedings—Proceedings of Parliament—Resolutions of the House of Burgesses of Virginia—The Governor dissolves the Assembly—The Members form and sign a Non-importation Agreement—Measures generally taken against the Importation of British Manufactures—General Court again Convened in Massachussets—Its Proceedings—Is prorogued—Administration Resolve on a Repeal of all the Duties except that on Tea—Circular Letter of the Earl of Hilsborough—New York recedes in Part from the Non-importation Agreement—Riot in Boston—Trial and

and Acquittal of Captain Preston—Insurrection in North Carolina--Dissatisfaction of Massachussets--Corresponding Committees appointed—Governor Hutchinson's Correspondence with Administration sent over by Dr. Franklin—The Assembly Petition for the Removal of the Governor and Lieutenant-governor—Hutchinson is succeeded by General Gage.

AT no period of time was the attachment of the colonists to the mother country more strong or more general than at present*. The war just concluded had very deeply interested every part of the continent; every colony had been engaged in it, and every colony had felt its ravages. The part

* After the expulsion of the French from Canada, a considerable degree of ill humour was manifested in Massachussetts, with respect to the manner in which the laws of trade were executed. A question was agitated in the court, in which the colony took a very deep interest. A custom-house officer applied for what was termed "a writ of assistance," which was an authority to search any house whatever for articles chargeable with duty suspected to be concealed in it. The right to grant special warrants was never contested; but this grant of a general warrant was deemed contrary to the principles of liberty, and was thought an engine of oppression equally useless and vexatious, which would enable every petty officer of the customs to gratify his resentments by harassing the most respectable men in the province. The ill-temper excited on this occasion was shewn by a reduction of the salaries of the judges, but no diminution of attachment to the mother country appears to have been produced by it.

taken in it by Indian auxiliaries had greatly increased its horrors, and had added to the joy produced in every bosom by its successful termination. The union of that vast tract of country, which extends from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, and from the Gulph of Mexico to the north pole, under one common sovereign, was deemed a certain guarantee of future peace, and an effectual security against the return of those bloody scenes, from the sufferings of which no condition in life could afford an exemption.

This state of things, so long and so anxiously wished for by British America, had at length been effected by the union of British and American valour. They had co-operated in the same service; their blood had mingled in the same plains; and the object pursued was common to both people.

While the British nation was endeared to the American heart by this community of danger and identity of interest, the brilliant achievements of the war had exalted to enthusiasm their admiration of British valour. They were proud of the land of their ancestors, and gloried in their descent from Englishmen. But this sentiment of admiration was not confined to the military character of the nation. A full portion of it was bestowed on their political institutions; and while the excellence of the English constitution was a rich theme of declamation in America, every man believed himself entitled to a large share of its advantages; nor could he admit that,

that, by crossing the Atlantic, his ancestors had relinquished the essential rights of Br tish subjects.

The degree of authority which might rightfully be exercised by the mother country over her colonies had never been accurately defined. In Britain it had always been asserted, that parliament possessed the power of binding them in all cases whatsoever. In America, at different times, and in different colonies, different opinions had been entertained on this subject.

In New England, originally settled by republicans, and, during the depression of the regal government, the favourite of the English nation, habits of independence had nourished the theory, that the colonial assemblies possessed all the powers of legislation not surrendered by compact: that the Americans were subjects of the British crown, but not of the nation; and were bound by no laws to which their representatives had not assented. From this high ground they had been compelled reluctantly to recede. The judges, being generally appointed by the governors, with the advice of council, had determined that the colonies were bound by acts of parliament which concerned them, and which were expressly extended to them; and we have seen the general court of Massachussets, on a late occasion, explicitly recognizing the same principle. This had perhaps become the opinion of many of the best informed men in the province; but the doctrine seems still to have been extensively maintained, that

acts of parliament possessed only an external obligation; that they could regulate commerce, but not the interior affairs of the colonies.

In the year 1692, immediately after the receipt of their new charter, granted by William and Mary, the legislature of Massachussets had passed an act denying most explicitly the right of any authority, other than that of the General Court, to impose on the colony any tax whatever; and also asserting those principles of national liberty which are found in Magna Charta. Not long afterwards the legislature of New York, probably with a view only to the authority claimed by the Governor, and not to that of the mother country, passed an act similar to that of Massachussetts, in which its own supremacy, not only in matters of taxation, but of general legislation, is expressly asserted. Both these acts, however, were disapproved in England, and the parliament asserted its authority by a law passed in 1696, declaring, "that all laws, by-laws, usages, and customs, which shall be in practice in any of the plantations, repugnant to any law made, or to be made, in this kingdom relative to the said plantations, shall be void and of none effect." And three years afterwards an act was passed for the trial of pirates in America, in which is to be found the following very extraordinary clause: "Be it further declared, that if any of the governors, or any person or persons in authority there, shall refuse to yield obedience to this act, such refusal is hereby declared to be a forfeiture

feiture of all and every the charters granted for the government and propriety of such plantation."

The English statute-book furnishes many instances in which the legislative power of Parliament over the colonies was exercised, so as to make regulations completely internal; and in no instance that is recollected was their authority openly controverted.

In the middle and southern provinces no question respecting the supremacy of parliament, in matters of general legislation, ever existed. The authority of such of their acts of internal regulation as were made for America, as well as of those for the regulation of commerce, even by the imposition of duties, provided those duties were imposed for the purposes of regulation, had been at all times admitted. But even these colonies, however they might acknowledge the supremacy of parliament in other respects, denied the right of that body to tax them internally.

Their submission to the act for establishing a general post-office, which was passed so early as the year 1710, and which raised a revenue on the carriage of letters, was thought no dereliction of this principle, because they never viewed it in the light of a tax, but rather as a compensation paid for a service rendered, of which every person was at liberty to avail himself or to decline it. And all the duties on trade were understood to be imposed rather with a view to prevent foreign commerce than to raise a revenue. Perhaps the legality of such acts was the less questioned because they were not rigor-

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ously executed and their violation was sometimes designedly overlooked*. A scheme for taxing the colonies by authority of parliament had been formed so early as the year 1739, and recommended to Government by a club of American merchants, at the head of whom was Sir William Keith, Governor of Pennsylvania. It was proposed to raise a body of the regulars, to be stationed along the western frontier of the British settlements, for the protection of the Indian traders, the expens of which establishment was to be paid with monies arising from a duty on stamped paper and parchment in all the colonies, to be imposed by parliament. This plan, however, was not countenanced by the then minister; and it seems never to have been seriously taken up by the go-

* Sir Robert Walpole, when prime minister of England, is said to have declared "that it was necessary to pass over some irregularities in the trade of the colonies with Europe. For by encouraging them to an extensive growing foreign commerce, he was convinced, that if they should gain £.500,000, full £.250,000 of their gains would, within two years, be brought into his Majesty's exchequer by the labour and produce of Great Britain consumed in America, a demand for which would increase with their wealth." The same able statesman, when urged to establish a system of internal taxation in the colonies, replied with a smile, "that he would leave that to some of his successors, who should have more courage, and less attachment to commerce, than himself." Confining them to the use of British manufactures was, he thought, "taxing them more agreeably to their own constitution and to that of Great Britain."

vernment

vernment until the year 1754, when a war, in which every part of the empire was deeply concerned, was about to commence. Some of the colonies themselves appear then to have wished that a mode could be adopted which should combine their exertions, and equitably apportion their expenses in the common cause. The attention of the minister was then turned to a plan of taxation by authority of parliament; and it will be recollected that a system was devised and recommended by him, as a substitute for the articles of union digested and agreed on by the convention at Albany. The temper and opinions of the colonists on this subject, which means were used to ascertain; the impolicy of irritating them at a crisis which required all the exertions they were capable of making; furnished motives sufficient to induce a suspension, for the present, of a measure so delicate and dangerous: but it seems not to have been totally abandoned. Of the right of parliament, as the supreme authority of the nation, to tax as well as to govern the colonies, those who guided the councils of Britain seem not to have entertained a doubt; and the language of men in power, on more than one occasion through the war, indicated a disposition to put this right in practice, when the termination of hostilities should render it less dangerous to do so. The conduct of some of the colonies, especially those in which a proprietary government was established, in failing to furnish in time the aids required

quired of them, contributed to foster this disposition. This total opposition of opinion, on a subject the most interesting to the human heart, was now about to produce a system of measures which tore asunder all the bonds of relationship and affection which had for ages subsisted, and planted almost inextinguishable hatred in bosoms where the warmest friendship had so long been cultivated.

The unexampled expenses of the war rendered unavoidable a great addition to the regular and usual taxes of the nation. Considerable difficulty was found in searching out new sources of revenue, and great opposition was made to every tax proposed. Thus embarrassed, the attention of administration was directed to the American continent. The system which had been laid aside was renewed; and, on the motion of Mr. Grenville, the first commissioner of the treasury, a resolution passed without much debate, importing that it would be proper to impose certain stamp-duties in the colonies and plantations, for the purpose of raising a revenue in America payable into the British exchequer. This resolution was not carried into immediate effect, and was only declaratory of an intention to be executed the ensuing year.

At the same time other resolutions passed, laying new duties on the trade of the colonies, which, being in the form of commercial regulations, were not generally contested on the ground of right, though

though they were imposed expressly for the purpose of raising revenue.

The colonies had been long in the habit of submitting to duties laid by parliament on their trade, and had not generally distinguished between those which were imposed for the mere purpose of regulating commerce, and this, which being also designed to raise a revenue, was, in truth, to every purpose, a real tax. It is therefore probable, that this system, if unconnected with the act for raising a revenue internally, might have been carried into operation without exciting any general combination of the colonies against it. Great disgust, however, was occasioned by the increase of the duties, by the new regulations which were made, and by the manner in which those regulations were to be executed. The gainful commerce long clandestinely carried on with the French and Spanish colonies, in the progress of which an evasion of the duties imposed by law had been overlooked by the government, was now to be very rigorously suppressed by taxes amounting to a prohibition of any fair trade, the exact collection of which was to be enforced by measures not much less offensive in themselves than on account of the object to be effected by them.

Completely to prevent smuggling, all the officers in the sea-service, who were on the American station, were converted into revenue-officers, and directed to take the custom-house oaths. Being unacquainted with the custom-house laws and usages, many vexatious

vexatious seizures were made, for which no redress could be obtained but in England. The penalties and forfeitures too accruing under the act, as if the usual authorities could not be trusted, were made recoverable in any court of vice-admiralty in the colonies. It will readily be conceived how much more odious a law made to effect an odious object must have been rendered by such provisions as these.

Whatever might have been the fate of the commercial regulations, the resolution concerning the duties on stamps excited great and general ferment in America. The right of parliament to impose taxes on the colonies, for the purpose of raising a revenue, became the subject of universal conversation, and was almost universally denied. Petitions to the king and memorials to both houses of parliament, against the measure, were transmitted by several of the provincial assemblies to the board of trade in England, to be presented immediately to his Majesty; and to Parliament, when that body should again be convened*. The House of Representatives of Massachussets instructed their agent to use his utmost endeavours to obtain a repeal of the late act respecting duties, and to prevent the passing of the stamp act, or any other act levying

* These petitions, as well as one from the merchants trading to America, were not received by parliament, it being alleged to be contrary to order, to receive petitions against money-bills.

taxes

taxes or impositions of any kind on the American provinces. A committee was appointed to act in the recess of the General Court, with instructions to correspond with the legislatures of the respective colonies, to communicate to them the instructions given to their agent, and to solicit their concurrence in similar measures. These legislative proceedings were in many places seconded by associations, entered into by individuals, for diminishing the use of British manufactures.

Perceiving the opposition to be encountered by adhering to the vote of the last session, the administration informed the agents of the colonies in London, that, if they would propose any other mode of raising the sum required*, their proposition would be accepted, and the stamp duty laid aside. The agents replied, that they were not authorized to propose any substitute, but were ordered to oppose the bill when it should be brought into the house, by petitions questioning the right claimed by parliament to tax the colonies. The controversy was now placed on ground which seemed to admit of no compromise. The right of taxation was as peremptorily denied by one party as it was asserted by the other. Determined to persevere in the system he had adopted, and believing successful resistance to be absolutely impossible, Mr. Grenville brought into parliament his celebrated act for imposing stamp

* 100,000l. sterling.

duties

duties in America; and it passed both houses by very great majorities, but not without animated debates. So little weight does the human mind allow to arguments the most conclusive, when directed against the existence of power in ourselves, that General Conway stood alone in denying the right claimed by the British legislature. He alone * had the courage to stem the torrent of public opinion, and with magnanimous firmness to protest against their right to give away the money of those who were not represented in that body.

The arguments of the minority on this interesting occasion were unusually ardent. The claim of England was declared "to be diametrically opposite to the letter and spirit of their constitution, which has established as a fundamental axiom, that taxation and representation are inseparable from each other; and that, as the colonies were not, and, from local and political obstacles, could not be, represented in the British parliament, it would be the very essence of tyranny to attempt to exercise an authority over them, which from its nature must inevitably lead to gross abuse. For, when Great Britain should be in full possession of the power now contended for, could it be imagined that parliament would not rather vote away the money of the colonists than of themselves and their own constituents?"

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* Mr. Pitt was not in the house; and Mr. Ingersoll in his Letter states that Alderman Beckford joined General Conway.

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The measure was treated not only as tyrannical, but as unnecessary also. America, it was said, "had never been deficient in contributing her full proportion towards the expenses of the wars in which, conjointly with England, she had been involved; and that, in the course of the last memorable contest, large sums had been repeatedly voted, as an indemnification to the colonies, for exertions allowed to be disproportionate to their means and resources*."

Mr. Grenville had concluded a long argument in favour of the bill, with saying, "These children of our own planting, nourished by our indulgence until they are grown to a good degree of strength and opulence, and protected by our arms, will they grudge to contribute their mite to relieve us from the heavy load of national expense which we lie under?" In answer to this observation Colonel Barré indignantly and eloquently exclaimed, "*Children planted by your care!*—No; your oppression planted them in America; they fled from your tyranny into an uncultivated land, where they were exposed to all the hardships to which human nature is liable, and, among others, to the savage cruelty of the

* Parliament had granted at different times to the American colonies, by way of reimbursement for their extraordinary expenses in the course of the last war, the sum of 1,031,666l. 13s. 4d. sterling. And the colonists are said to have lost in the course of the war near thirty thousand of their young men.

enemy

enemy of the country—a people the most subtle, and, I will take upon me to say, the most terrible that ever inhabited any part of God's earth. And yet, actuated by principles of true English liberty, they met all these hardships with pleasure, compared with those they suffered in their own country, from those who should have been their friends. *They nourished by your indulgence!*—No: they grew by your neglect:—when you began to care about them, that care was exercised in sending persons to rule over them, who were the deputies of some deputy sent to spy out their liberty, to misrepresent their actions, and to prey upon them;—men whose behaviour, on many occasions, has caused the blood of those sons of liberty to recoil within them;—men promoted to the highest seats of justice—some of whom were glad, by going to a foreign country, to escape being brought to the bar of justice in their own. *They protected by your arms!*—They have nobly taken up arms in your defence; have exerted their valour, amidst their constant and laborious industry, for the defence of a country, the interior of which, while its frontiers were drenched in blood, has yielded all its little savings to your enlargement. *Believe me—remember I this day told you so—the same spirit which actuated that people at first still continues with them:*—But prudence forbids me to explain myself further. God knows, I do not at this time speak from party heat. However superior to me in general knowledge

and experience any one here may be, I claim to know more of America, having seen and been conversant in that country. The people there are as truly loyal, I believe, as any subjects the king has; but they are a people jealous of their liberties, and who will vindicate them if they should be violated. But the subject is delicate—I will say no more."

The passing of this act, the operation of which was to commence on the first of November, excited throughout the colonies the most serious and universal alarm: it was believed sincerely to wound vitally the constitution of the country, and to destroy the most sacred principles of liberty. Combinations against its execution were every where formed, and the utmost exertions were used to render as diffusive as possible a knowledge of the pernicious consequences which must flow from admitting that America could be taxed by a legislature in which she was not represented.

The Assembly of Virginia was in session when the intelligence was received. The subject was taken up, and, by a small majority, several resolutions*, which had been introduced by Mr. Henry, and

* These, being the first resolutions of any assembly after the passing of the stamp act, are inserted.

Whereas the honourable House of Commons in England has of late drawn into question how far the General Assembly of this colony hath power to enact laws for laying taxes and imposing duties payable by the people of this his Majesty's most ancient colony; for settling and ascertaining the same to all future times, the House

and seconded by Mr. Johnson, were agreed to; one of which asserts the exclusive right of that Assembly

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House of Burgesses of this present General Assembly have come to the several following resolutions:

Resolved, That the first adventurers and settlers of this his Majesty's colony and dominion of Virginia brought with them, and transmitted to their posterity, and all other his Majesty's subjects since inhabiting in this his Majesty's colony, all the privileges and immunities that have at any time been held, enjoyed, and possessed by the people of Great Britain.

Resolved, That by the two royal charters granted by King James I. the colonies aforesaid are declared entitled to all privileges of faithful, liege, and natural born subjects, to all intents and purposes, as if they had been abiding in, and born within the realm of, England.

Resolved, That his Majesty's most liege people of this his most ancient colony have enjoyed the right of being thus governed by their own Assembly, in the article of taxes and internal police, and that the same have never been forfeited, nor any other way yielded up, but have been constantly recognised by the King and people of Great Britain.

Resolved, therefore, That the General Assembly of this colony, together with his Majesty, or his substitute, have, in their representative capacity, the only exclusive right and power to lay taxes and impositions upon the inhabitants of this colony; and that every attempt to vest such a power in any person or persons whatsoever, other than the General Assembly aforesaid, is illegal, unconstitutional, and unjust, and has a manifest tendency to destroy British as well as American freedom.

Such were the resolutions as agreed to by that part of the Assembly which was most timid.—The following resolutions were also introduced by Mr. Henry, and passed the committee, but were not agreed to in the House.

Resolved,

bly to lay taxes and impositions on the inhabitants of that colony; and that every attempt to vest such a power elsewhere "is illegal, unconstitutional, and unjust, and has a manifest tendency to destroy British as well as American freedom."

On the passing of these resolutions the Governor dissolved the Assembly, and writs for new elections were issued. But so entirely did the people take part with the opposition to the scheme of taxation proposed by ministers, that, in almost every instance, the members who had voted in favour of the resolutions were re-elected, while those who had voted against them were generally excluded in favour of candidates who entertained popular opinions.

The legislatures of several other colonies passed resolutions similar to those of Virginia; and the House of Representatives of Massachussetts, contemplating a still more solemn and effectual expression of the general sentiment, recommended a

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Resolved, That his Majesty's liege people, the inhabitants of this colony, are not bound to yield obedience to any law or ordinance whatsoever, designed to impose any taxation whatsoever upon them, other than the laws and ordinances of the General Assembly aforesaid.

Resolved, That any person who shall, by speaking or writing, maintain that any person or persons, other than the General Assembly of this colony, have any right or power to lay any taxation whatsoever on the people here, shall be deemed an enemy to his Majesty's colony.

Congress of Deputies from all the Colonial Assemblies, to meet at New York the first Tuesday in October, to consult together on the present circumstances of the colonies, and the difficulties to which they are and must be reduced by the operation of the acts of parliament for levying taxes on them. Circular letters, signed by the speaker, communicating this recommendation, were addressed to the several speakers of the respective Provincial Assemblies; and wherever they were in session the recommendation was acted on. New Hampshire alone, although joining in the general opposition, declined sending members to the Congress; and the Legislatures of Virginia and North Carolina were not in session.

In the mean time the papers teemed with the most animating exhortations to the people, to unite in the defence of their liberty and property; and the stamp officers*, almost every where, were compelled to resign.

At the time appointed the Commissioners from

* They were generally gentlemen of influence in the several provinces, who were recommended by the colonial agents;—so little did they expect the serious opposition made in America to this measure. Mr. Gordon says, that Dr. Franklin advised Mr. Ingersoll to accept the appointment which was offered him, and added, at the same time, "Go home, and tell your countrymen to get children as fast as they can;" plainly alluding to their supposed present inability to resist the power of Britain.

the Assemblies of Massachussetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the three lower counties on the Delaware, Maryland, and South Carolina, assembled at New York; and Timothy Ruggles, Esq. of Massachussetts, having been chosen their Chairman, they proceeded on the important objects for which they had been convened. The first measure of the Congress was a declaration* of the rights and grievances of the

* The members of this Congress, sincerely devoted with the warmest sentiments of affection and duty to his Majesty's person and government, inviolably attached to the present happy establishment of the protestant succession, and with minds deeply impressed by a sense of the present and impending misfortunes of the British colonies on this continent, having considered as maturely as time will permit, the circumstances of the said colonies, esteem it our indispensable duty to make the following declarations of our humble opinion respecting the most essential rights and liberties of the colonists, and of the grievances under which they labour by reason of several late acts of parliament.

I. That his Majesty's subjects in these colonies owe the same allegiance to the crown of Great Britain that is owing from his subjects born within the realm, and all due subordination to that august body, the Parliament of Great Britain.

II. That his Majesty's liege subjects in these colonies are entitled to all the inherent rights and liberties of his natural-born subjects within the kingdom of Great Britain.

III. That it is inseparably essential to the freedom of a people, and the undoubted right of Englishmen, that no taxes be imposed on them but with their own consent, given personally or by their representatives.

the colonists. This paper asserts them to be entitled to all the rights and liberties of natural born subjects within

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IV. That the people of these colonies are not, and, from their local circumstances, cannot be, represented in the House of Commons of Great Britain.

V. That the only representatives of these colonies are persons chosen therein by themselves; and that no taxes ever have been, or can be, constitutionally imposed upon them but by their respective legislatures.

VI. That all supplies to the crown being free gifts from the people, it is unreasonable, and inconsistent with the principles and spirit of the British constitution, for the people of Great Britain to grant to his Majesty the property of the colonists.

VII. That trial by jury is the inherent and invaluable right of every British subject in these colonies.

VIII. That the late act of parliament entitled, "An Act for granting and applying certain Stamp Duties and other Duties in the British colonies and plantations in America," &c. by imposing taxes on the inhabitants of these colonies; and the said act, and several other acts, by extending the jurisdiction of the courts of admiralty beyond its ancient limits, have a manifest tendency to subvert the rights and liberties of the colonists.

IX. That the duties imposed by several late acts of parliament, from the peculiar circumstances of these colonies, will be extremely burthensome and grievous, and, from the scarcity of specie, the payment of them absolutely impracticable.

X. That as the profits of the trade of these colonies ultimately centre in Great Britain, to pay for the manufactures which they are obliged to take from thence, they eventually contribute very largely to all supplies granted to the crown.

XI. That the restrictions imposed by several late acts of parliament on the trade of these colonies will render them unable to purchase the manufactures of Great Britain.

XII.

within the kingdom of Great Britain; among the most essential of which are, the exclusive power to tax themselves, and the privilege of a trial by jury.

The grievance most complained of was, the act granting certain stamp duties and other duties in the British colonies, the direct tendency of which, they said, by taxing the colonists without their consent, and by extending the jurisdiction of courts of admiralty, was to subvert their rights and liberties.

A petition to the king was also agreed on, together with a memorial to each house of parliament.

These papers were drawn with temper and firmness; they express unequivocally the attachment of the colonists to the mother country, and assert the rights they claim in the style of conviction.

In addition to these measures, Congress recom-

XII. That the increase, prosperity, and happiness of these colonies depend on the full and free enjoyment of their rights and liberties, and an intercourse with Great Britain mutually affectionate and advantageous.

XIII. That it is the right of the British subjects in these colonies to petition the king or either house of parliament.

XIV. That it is the indispensable duty of these colonies to the best of sovereigns, to the mother country, and to themselves, to endeavour by a loyal and dutiful address to his majesty, and humble applications to both houses of parliament to procure the repeal of the act for granting and applying certain stamp duties, of all clauses of any other acts of parliament whereby the jurisdiction of the admiralty is extended as aforesaid, and of the other late acts for the restriction of American commerce.

mended to the several colonies to appoint special agents, who should unite their utmost endeavours in soliciting redress of grievances; and having directed their clerk to make out a copy of their proceedings for each colony, they adjourned.

To interest the people of England against the measures of administration, associations were formed in every part of the continent, for the encouragement of domestic manufactures, and against the use of those imported from Great Britain. To increase their quantity of wool, they determined to kill no lambs, and to use all the means in their power to multiply their flocks of sheep. As a security against the use of stamps, proceedings in the courts of justice were suspended, and it was earnestly recommended to settle all controversies by arbitration. While this determined and systematic opposition was made by the thinking part of the community, there were some riotous and disorderly meetings, especially in the large towns, which threatened serious consequences. Many houses were destroyed, much property injured, and several persons highly respectable in character and station grossly abused. These violences received no countenance from the leading members of society; but it was extremely difficult to stimulate the mass of the people to that rigorous and persevering opposition which was deemed essential to the preservation of American liberty, and yet to restrain all those excesses which disgrace and often defeat the wisest measures. In Connecti-

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cut and New York originated an association of persons, styling themselves the "*Sons of Liberty*," who bound themselves, among other things, to march to any part of the continent, at their own expense, to support the British constitution in America; by which was expressly stated to be understood, the prevention of any attempt which might any where be made to carry the stamp act into operation. A corresponding committee of these "Sons of Liberty" was established, who addressed letters to certain conspicuous characters throughout the colonies, and contributed very materially to increase the spirit of opposition, and perhaps the turbulence with which it was in some places attended.

While these transactions were taking place in America, causes entirely unconnected with the affairs of the colonies produced a total revolution in the British cabinet. The Grenville party was succeeded by an administration unfriendly to a further prosecution of the plan for taxing the colonies without their consent. General Conway, now one of the principal secretaries of state, addressed a circular letter to the respective Governors of the colonies, in which he disapproved, in mild terms, the violent measures which had been adopted in America, and recommended to them, while they maintained the dignity of the Crown and of Parliament, to observe a temperate and conciliatory conduct towards the colonists, and endeavour by all persuasive means to restore the public peace.

Parliament was opened by a speech from the throne, in which his Majesty declared "his firm confidence in their wisdom and zeal which would, he doubted not, guide them to such sound and prudent resolutions as might tend at once to preserve the constitutional rights of the British Legislature over the colonies, and to restore to them that harmony and tranquillity which had lately been interrupted by disorders of the most dangerous nature."

In the course of the debate in the House of Commons, on the motion for the address, Mr. Pitt in the most explicit terms condemned the act for collecting the stamp duties in America, and declared his opinion to be, that Parliament had no right to tax the colonies. At the same time he asserted the authority of that kingdom to be sovereign and supreme in every circumstance of government and legislation whatever. He maintained the difficult proposition, "that taxation is no part of the governing or legislative power; but that taxes are a voluntary gift and grant of the Commons alone." He concluded a very able and very eloquent speech, by recommending to the House "that the Stamp Act be repealed *absolutely, totally, and immediately.*"

The opinions which had been maintained by Mr. Pitt were very warmly opposed by the late ministers, headed by Mr. Grenville. He said "that the disturbances in America were grown to tumults and riots; he doubted they bordered on open rebellion; and

and, if the doctrine he had heard that day should be confirmed, he feared they would lose that name, to take that of revolution. The government over them being dissolved, "a revolution," he said, "would take place in America." He contended that taxation was a part of the sovereign power; one branch of the legislation; and had been exercised over those who were not represented. He could not comprehend the distinction between external and internal taxation, and insisted that the colonies ought to bear a part of the burthens occasioned by a war for their defence.

The existing administration, however, concurred in sentiment with Mr. Pitt, and the act was repealed; but its repeal was accompanied with a declaratory act, asserting the power and right of Great Britain to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever.

The joy in America, on receiving intelligence of this event, was unbounded. The assertion of the abstract principle of right gave them but little concern, because they considered it merely as a *salvo* for the wounded pride of the nation, and believed confidently that no future attempt would be made to reduce it to practice. The highest honours were every where conferred on those parliamentary leaders who had been strenuous in obtaining a repeal of the act; and in Virginia an act passed the House of Burgesses for erecting a statue to his Majesty, as an acknowledgment of their high

sense

sense of his attention to the rights and petitions of his people. With the repealing and declaratory acts came a circular letter from Secretary Conway, extolling "the moderation, the forbearance, the unexampled lenity and tenderness of parliament towards the colonies; this signal display of which, he hoped, "could not but dispose them to that return of cheerful obedience to the laws and legislative authority of great Britain, and to those sentiments of respectful gratitude to the mother country, which are the natural, and," he trusted, "would be the certain effects of so much grace and condescension, so remarkably manifested on the part of his Majesty and of the parliament."

Although the sentiment of joy produced by the repeal of the stamp act was common to all the colonies, the same temper did not prevail in all of them: the commercial regulations excited, in the northern trading towns, scarcely less disgust than had been created by the stamp act itself; in addition to which, political parties had been formed, and had assumed a bitterness in some of the colonies entirely unknown in others; and the first measures of the Massachussetts and New York demonstrated that the reconciliation with the mother country was not yet cordial.

The letter of Secretary Conway, already mentioned, enclosed also a resolution of Parliament, declaring that those persons who had suffered any injury or damage, in consequence of their assisting to execute

ecute the late act, ought to be compensated by the colonies in which such injuries were sustained.

The injuries complained of had been principally sustained in Massachussetts; and the resolution of parliament was laid before the general court of that province by Governor Bernard, in a speech rather in the spirit of the late than of the present administration—rather calculated to irritate than assuage the angry passions which had lately been excited. The house of representatives resented his manner of addressing them, and appeared more disposed to inquire into the riots, and to compel those concerned in them to make indemnities, than to compensate the sufferers out of the public purse. But after a second session, and some intimation that parliament would enforce its requisition, the desire of avoiding further controversies with the government, especially on a point which would unite the prejudices of all thinking men against them, and the real detestation in which those disgraceful tumults were held, got the better of their resentment against the governor, and an act of pardon to the offenders, and of indemnity to the sufferers, was passed: but it was rejected by the king, because the Colonial Assembly had no power under their charter to pass an act of general pardon but at the instance of the Crown.

In New York, where General Gage was expected with a considerable body of troops, a message was transmitted by the governor to the legislature, desiring

siring their compliance with an act of parliament called the mutiny act, which required that the colony in which any of his Majesty's forces might be stationed, should provide for them barracks and certain necessaries in their quarters. The legislature postponed the consideration of this message until the troops had actually arrived, and then, after a second message from the governor, reluctantly and partially complied with the requisitions of the act.

At a subsequent session the governor brought the subject again before them; when they determined that the act of parliament could only be construed to require that they should provide necessaries for troops on a march, and not while permanently stationed in their country; because, on a contrary construction, the colony might be grieviously burthened by marching into it several regiments.

The reason assigned for not complying with this act of parliament, seems to evidence the opinion that it was rightfully obligatory: and yet the requisitions of the mutiny act were unquestionably a tax; and between the power of parliament to levy a tax by its own authority, and to levy a tax through the medium of the colonial legislatures, they having no right to refuse obedience to the act, no essential distinction can easily be drawn. It is strange that such inaccurate ideas should then have prevailed in any part of the continent concerning the controul which might rightfully be exercised by the British parliament over the colonies.

It

was considered in England as evidencing a strong disposition on the part of ministers to avoid all harsh measures, that this instance of disobedience was punished with no possitive penalties; but, resisting all the violent propositions of those who contended that America was in a state of absolute disorder and open rebellion, they contented themselves with a law prohibiting the Governor, Council, and Assembly of the province from passing any act until the requisition of parliament had been in every respect complied with.

The persevering temper of Massachussetts had not yet found its way to New York, and this measure produced the desired effect; the mutiny act was literally complied with.

Two companies of artillery, driven into the harbour of Boston by stress of weather, applied to the Governor for the necessary and usual supplies. He laid the application before his council, who advised that, "*in pursuance to the act of parliament*," the supplies required should be furnished. They were furnished, and the money, amounting to about sixty pounds sterling, drawn from the treasury by the authority of the executive.

The General Court meet soon after, and the House of Representatives, very early in the session, sent a message to the Governor, requesting to know whether any provision had been made for his Majesty's troops lately arrived in their harbour, and by whom? and whether he had reason to expect the

arrived

arrival of any more troops to be quartered on the province?

The Governor, in reply, transmitted them the journals of the Council, with an account of the expense incurred; and also informed them that he had no reason to expect the arrival of any additional body of troops.

The House expressed, in very pointed terms, their disapprobation of the conduct of the Governor: "He had no right," they said, "on the advice of Council, to issue money out of the treasury but in conformity with such acts as may, at the time, be in force within the province; and, in the case of his exceeding his authority under the pressure of urgent necessity, it was his duty to seize the first occasion for laying the matter before that House." But particular umbrage was excited by the declaration, that these steps had been taken *in pursuance of an act of parliament.* After the repeal of the stamp act, they were surprised to find that this act, equally odious and unconstitutional, should remain in force. They lamented the entry of this reason for the advice of Council the more, as it was an unwarrantable and unconstitutional step, which totally disabled them from testifying the same cheerfulness they had always shewn in granting to his Majesty, of their free accord, such aids as his service has from time to time required.

Copies of these messages were transmitted by Governor Bernard to the ministry, in a manner not calculated

calculated to render the communication less unpleasant.

The idea of raising a revenue in America was highly favoured in England, especially by the landed interest; and not even the weight of administration could have obtained a repeal of the stamp act on the naked principle of right. Few were hardy enough to question the supremacy of parliament; and their having receded from the practical assertion of their power to tax the colonists, deeply wounded the pride and grated harshly on the feelings not only of the king, who was supposed to be still under the influence of the Earl of Bute, but of a considerable part of the nation.

The temper now discovered in some of the colonies was by no means calculated to assuage the wound which this measure had inflicted on the haughty spirit of the rulers of that country, and is supposed to have contributed in no small degree to the revival of a system which had been reluctantly abandoned.

Charles Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer, in an administration formed by Lord Chatham, a man of splendid and versatile talents, said boastingly in the House of Commons, that "he knew how to draw a revenue from the colonies without giving them offence*." Mr. Grenville eagerly

* Belsham,

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caught at the declaration, and instantly urged this minister to pledge himself to bring forward the measure at which he had hinted. A bill had been decided on in the cabinet during the sickness and absence of Lord Chatham, whose infirmities had for the time impaired both his talents and his influence, for imposing certain duties on tea, glass, paper, and painters' colours, imported into the colonies from Great Britain. This bill was now brought into Parliament, and passed almost without opposition: the taxes it imposed were appropriated, in the first instance, to the payment of the salaries of the governors, judges, and other officers of government.

The friends of America in England had distinguished between internal and external taxation; and the same distinction had also been made in the colonies. As the power of parliament to impose duties for the purpose of commercial regulations had never been doubted, it is possible that, if the present measure had been adopted in the first instance, it might, as well as the act laying a duty on sugars, have been submitted to without examination; but the discussions to which the stamp act had given birth, had greatly enlarged the circle of political information in America, and, while they rendered more diffusive among the colonists a knowledge of their rights, had inspired also a much more accurate mode of thinking respecting them.

The present duties were plainly intended not to regulate commerce, but to raise a revenue, which would

would be as certainly collected from the colonies as the duties on stamps could have been. The principle of the two measures was precisely the same. The mode of attack indeed was varied, but the same object was still pursued. Many of the Americans were now too intelligent to be misguided by the distinction between internal and external taxation, or by the precedents quoted in support of the right contended for. This, they said, was plainly an internal tax, as the duties would be unavoidably paid in the country; and, if external, yet it was imposed, not for the purpose of regulating or restraining trade, but of raising a revenue; it was considered as establishing a precedent of taxation for the mere purpose of revenue, which might afterwards be extended at the discretion of Parliament, and was spoken of as the *entering wedge* designed to make way for impositions too heavy to be borne. The appropriation of the money did not lessen the odium of the tax: the Colonial Legislatures considered the dependence of Governors and other officers on them for their salaries, as the best security for their attending to the interests and cultivating the affections of the provinces.

With these sentiments concerning the act, it was not strange that a determination was made to oppose its execution*; yet the idea of its being uncon-

* Prior Documents.

 stitutional

stitutional was not taken up so suddenly or so universally as had been witnessed in the case of the stamp act. Many very able political essays appeared in the papers, demonstrating the violation contained in this law of the principles of the English constitution and of English liberty; and earnestly exhorting the people of America to take measures which would defeat its operation. The effect of these essays was gradual but certain; and the public judgment seemed at length convinced, that the same principle which had before been successfully opposed was again approaching under a different garb.

The general court of Massachussetts met in December, and very early in the session took under their consideration several acts of parliament which, during the recess, had been transmitted to the colony. They perceived plainly that the claim to tax America was revived, and they determined to oppose it with all the means in their power.

A very elaborate letter was addressed to Dennis de Berdt, agent for the house of representatives, in which are detailed at great length, and with much weight of argument, all the objections to be made to the late acts of parliament. Letters signed by the Speaker were also addressed to the Earl of Shelburne and General Conway, secretaries of state; to the Marquis of Rockingham, Lord Camden, the Earl of Chatham, and the lords commissioners of the treasury. These letters*, while they breathe

* Prior Documents.

a spirit

a spirit of ardent attachment to the British constitution and the British nation, manifest a perfect conviction that their complaints were just; a conviction founded on an entire understanding of the soundest political principles, which ought to have arrested the mad course now recommenced.

"Conscious of their own disposition," say they to General Conway, "they rely upon that candour which is a distinguished mark of your character; and however they may have been represented to his Majesty's ministers as undutiful, turbulent, and factious, your sentiments are too generous to impute expressions of uneasiness under the operation of any particular acts of the British parliament, to a peevish or discontented habit, much less to the want of a due veneration for that august assembly.

"This house is at all times ready to recognize his Majesty's high court of parliament, the supreme legislative power over the whole empire: its superintending authority, in all cases consistent with the fundamental rules of the constitution, is as clearly admitted by his Majesty's subjects in this province as by those within the realm. Since the constitution of the state, as it ought to be, is fixed, it is humbly presumed that the subjects in every part of the empire, however remote, have an equitable claim to all the advantages of it."

To the Earl of Shelburne, after stating the hardships encountered by their fathers, and their attachment to the mother country, they insist that the

common law, as well as their charter, gives them all the rights and liberties of British subjects.

" The spirit of the law of nature and nations," they proceed to say, " supposes that all the free subjects of any kingdom are entitled equally to all the rights of the constitution; for it appears unnatural and unreasonable to affirm, that local or any other circumstances can justly deprive any part of the subjects of the same prince of the full enjoyment of the rights of that constitution upon which the government itself is formed, and by which sovereignty and allegiance are ascertained and limited.

" There are, my lord, fundamental rules of the constitution, which it is humbly presumed, neither the supreme legislative nor the supreme executive can alter. In all free states the constitution is fixed: it is from thence the legislative derives its authority; therefore it cannot change the constitution without destroying its own foundation. If, then, the constitution of Great Britain is the common right of all British subjects, it is humbly referred to your lordship's judgment, whether the supreme legislative of the empire may rightly leap the bounds of it in the exercise of power over the subjects in America, any more than over those in Britain.

" It is the glory of the British constitution that it has its foundation in the laws of God and nature; it is essentially a right that a man shall quietly enjoy and have the disposal of his own property: this right is ingrafted into the British constitution, and is familiar

miliar to the American subjects; and your lordship will judge whether any necessity can render it just and equitable in the nature of things, that the supreme legislative of the empire should impose duties, subsidies, talliages and taxes, internal or external, for the sole purpose of raising a revenue upon subjects that are not, and cannot, considering their local circumstances, by any possibility, be equally represented, and consequently whose consent cannot be had in parliament.

"The security of right and property is the great end of government: surely, then, such measures as tend to render right and property precarious, tend to destroy both property and government; for these must stand or fall together. Property is admitted to have existence in the savage state of nature; and if it be necessary for the support of savage life, it becomes by no means less so in civil society. The house intreats your lordship to consider whether a colonist can be conceived to have any property which he may call his own, if it may be granted away by any other body without his consent; and they submit to your lordship's judgment whether this was not actually done when the act for granting to his majesty certain duties on paper, glass, and other articles, for the sole and express purpose of raising a revenue in America, was made."

They conclude a very able course of reasoning on the question of the constitutional right to tax America, with saying, "It is by no means, my lord, a

disposition in the house to dispute the just authority of the supreme legislative of the nation, that induces them thus to address your lordship, but a warm sense of loyalty to their prince, and, they humbly apprehend, a just concern for their natural and constitutional rights. They beg your lordship would excuse their trespassing on your time and attention to the great affairs of state; they apply to you as a friend to the rights of mankind and of British subjects: as Americans, they implore your lordship's patronage, and beseech you to represent their grievances to the king, our sovereign, and employ your happy influence for their relief."

Arguments which would have appeared so conclusive to Englishmen, if urged by themselves, in support of their own rights, had but little weight when used to disprove the existence of their authority over others. The deep and solemn tone of conviction, however, conveyed in all these letters, ought to have produced a certainty that the principles assumed in them had made a strong impression, and would not lightly be abandoned; it ought to have been foreseen that, with such a people, so determined, the conflict must be stern and hazardous; and, even if ultimate success might be counted on, it was well worth the estimate, whether the object would compensate the means used in obtaining it.

A petition to the king was also agreed on, replete with professions of loyalty and attachment to his person and family; but stating, in very explicit terms the

the sense they entertained of the acts against which they petitioned.

After the petition to the king had been voted, a day was appointed to take into consideration the propriety of addressing their sister colonies on a subject equally interesting to all. After long and earnest debate, the motion for the address was lost in a house consisting of eighty-two msmbers*; but, on a motion for re-considering the resolution, which was made on a subsequent day, in a house consisting of the same number of members, it was carried in the affirmative by a great majority; and, by an immediate subsequent resolve, the first resolution was erased.

A circular letter to the assemblies of the respective colonies, stating the proceedings of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, was then agreed to; one copy of which was presented to their governor, and another copy, to prevent its being misrepresented, was transmitted to their agent in London†.

To

* The whole number of members was then one hundred and ten.

† *Province of Massachusetts' Bay, Feb. 11th, 1768.*

SIR,

The House of Representatives of this province have taken into their consideration the great difficulties that must accrue to themselves and their constituents, by the operation of the several acts of parliaments imposing duties and taxes on the American colonies.

As it is a subject in which every colony is deeply interested,

To avoid what might give to these measures taken in defence of rights believed to be the most clear and

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they have no reason to doubt but your house is duly impressed with its importance, and that such constitutional measures will be come into as are proper. It seems to be necessary that all possible care should be taken that the representations of the several assemblies, upon so delicate a point, should harmonize with each other: the house therefore hopes that this letter will be candidly considered, in no other light than as expressing a disposition freely to communicate their mind to a sister colony, upon a common concern, in the same manner as they would be glad to receive the sentiments of your or any other house of assembly on the continent.

The house have humbly represented to the ministry their own sentiments, that his Majesty's high court of parliament is the supreme legislative power over the whole empire; that in all free states the constitution is fixed, and, as the supreme legislative derives its power and authority from the constitution, it cannot overleap the bounds of it without destroying its foundation; that the constitution ascertains and limits both sovereignty and allegiance; and therefore his Majesty's American subjects, who acknowledge themselves bound by the ties of allegiance, have an equitable claim to the full enjoyment of the fundamental rules of the British constitution; that it is an essential unalterable right in nature, ingrafted into the British constitution as a fundamental law, and ever held sacred and irrevocable by the subjects within the realm, that what a man hath honestly acquired is absolutely his own, which he may freely give, but cannot be taken from him without his consent; that the American subjects may therefore, exclusive of any consideration of charter rights, with a decent firmness, adapted to the character of freemen and subjects, assert this natural and constitutional right.

It is moreover their humble opinion, which they express with the greatest deference to the wisdom of the parliament, that the acts made there, imposing duties on the people of this province, with the

and the most sacred, the appearance of systematic opposition to the British government, the house, soon

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the sole and express purpose of raising a revenue, are infringements of their natural and constitutional rights; because, as they are not represented in the British parliament, his Majesty's Commons in Britain, by those acts, grant their property without their consent.

This house further is of opinion, that their constituents, considering their local circumstances, cannot by any possibility be represented in the Parliament; and that it will for ever be impracticable that they should be equally represented there, and consequently not at all, being separated by an ocean of a thousand leagues. That his Majesty's royal predecessors, for this reason, were graciously pleased to form a subordinate legislative here, that their subjects might enjoy the unalienable right of a representation. Also that, considering the utter impracticability of their ever being fully and equally represented in parliament, and the great expense that must unavoidably attend even a partial representation there, this house think that a taxation of their constituents, even without their consent, grievous as it is, would be preferable to any representation that could be admitted for them there.

Upon these principles, and also considering that were the right in the parliament ever so clear, yet, for obvious reasons, it would be beyond the rule of equity that their constituents should be taxed on the manufactures of Great Britain here, in addition to the duties they pay for them in England, and other advantages arising to Great Britain from the acts of trade; this house have preferred a humble, dutiful, and loyal petition to our most gracious Sovereign, and made such representation to his Majesty's ministers as they apprehend would tend to obtain redress.

They have also submitted to consideration, whether any people can be said to enjoy any degree of freedom, if the crown in addition to its undoubted authority of constituting a governor, should appoint him such a stipend as it shall judge proper without the consent

soon after concluding their circular letter, called up a requisition of the governor to make a further provision

consent of the people, and at their expense: and whether, while the judges of the land and other civil officers hold not their commissions during good behaviour, their having salaries appointed for them by the crown, independent of the people, hath not a tendency to subvert the principles of equity, and endanger the happiness and security of the subject.

In addition to these measures, the house have written a letter to their agent, Mr. De Berdt, the sentiments of which he is directed to lay before the ministry, wherein they take notice of the hardship of the act for preventing mutiny and desertion, which requires the governor and council to provide enumerated articles for the king's marching troops, and the people to pay the expense; and also the commission of the gentlemen appointed commissioners of the customs to reside in America, which authorizes them to make as many appointments as they think fit, and to pay the appointees what sums they please, for whose malconduct they are not accountable: from whence it may happen that officers of the crown may be multiplied to such a degree as to become dangerous to the liberties of the people, by virtue of a commission which doth not appear to this house to derive any such advantages to trade as many have been led to expect.

These are the sentiments and proceedings of the house; and as they have too much reason to believe that the enemies of the colonies have represented them to his Majesty's ministers and the parliament as factious, disloyal, and having a disposition to make themselves independent of the mother country, they have taken occasion, in the most humble terms, to assure his Majesty and his ministers, that, with regard to the people of this province, and as they doubt not of all the colonies, the charge is unjust.

The house is fully satisfied that your Assembly is too generous and enlarged in sentiment to believe that this letter proceeds from

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provision for one of the king's garrisons within the province; which, without acknowledging the obligations of the mutiny act, they, of their free accord, instantly complied with. Soon afterwards the governor prorogued the general court. This measure was accompanied by an angry speech, but little calculated to diminish the resentments of the house, directed personally against him—resentments occasioned as well by the haughtiness of his manners, and a persuasion that he had misrepresented, in his letters to ministers, their conduct and opinions, as by the unpopular course his station at present required him to pursue.

The circular letter of the house of representatives of Massachussets was extremely well received in the other colonies; they generally approved the measures of opposition which had been taken, and readily united in them. They, too, petitioned the king against the obnoxious acts of parliament, and instructed their several agents to use all proper means to obtain their repeal. Virginia transmitted to her sister colonies a statement of her pro-

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an ambition of taking the lead, or dictating to the other Assemblies; they freely submit their opinion to the judgment of others; and shall take it kind in your house to point out to them any thing further that may be thought necessary.

This house cannot conclude without expressing their firm confidence in the king, our common head and father, that the united and dutiful supplications of his distressed American subjects will meet with his royal and favourable acceptance.

ceedings;

ceedings; and in the letter to Massachussetts, communicating the representation made by the House of Burgesses to parliament, they say, "that they do not affect an independency of their parent kingdom, the prosperity of which they are bound to the utmost of their abilities to promote; but cheerfully acquiesce in the authority of parliament to make laws for preserving a necessary dependence, and for regulating the trade of the colonies. Yet they cannot conceive, and humbly insist it is not essential to support a proper relation between the mother country and colonies transplanted from her, that she should have a right to raise money from them without their consent; and presume they do not aspire to more than the rights of British subjects, when they assert that no power on earth has a right to impose taxes on the people, or take the smallest portion of their property, without their consent given by their representatives in parliament. This has ever been considered as the chief pillar of the constitution:—without this support no man can be said to have the least shadow of liberty, since they can have no property in that which another can by right take from them when he pleases without their consent.*"

On

* In this letter, too, the House of Burgesses, after reprobating the act imposing duties on glass, &c. express their opinion concerning the mutiny act in the following terms: "The act suspending

On the first intimation of the measures taken by Massachussetts, the Earl of Hillsborough, who had been appointed, about the close of the year 1767, to the then newly-created office of secretary of state for the department of the colonies, addressed a circular letter to the several governors, to be laid by them before the assemblies of their respective colonies, in which he treats the circular letter of Massachussetts as being of the most dangerous and factious tendency, calculated to inflame the minds of his Majesty's good subjects in the colonies, to promote an unwarrantable combination, to excite and encourage an open opposition to, and denial of, the authority of parliament, and to subvert the true principles of the constitution; and he endeavours to prevail with them to treat with a proper resentment, what he terms "such an unjustifiable attempt to revive those distractions which have ope-

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ing the legislative power of New York, they consider as still more alarming to the colonies, though it has that single province in view. If parliament can compel them to furnish a single article to the troops sent over, they may, by the same rule, oblige them to furnish clothes, arms, and every other necessary, even the pay of the officers and soldiers; a doctrine replete with every mischief, and utterly subversive of all that is dear and valuable; for what advantage can the people of the colonies derive from their right of choosing their own representatives, if those representatives, when chosen, be not permitted to exercise their own judgments, but must be under a necessity (on pain of being deprived of their legislative authority) of enforcing the mandates of a British parliament?"

rated so fatally to the prejudice of the colonies, and of the mother country;" but in any event not to take part with Massachussetts by approving such proceedings.

Far from producing the desired effect, this letter of the Earl of Hillsborough rather served to strengthen the determination of the colonies to unite in their endeavours for the purpose of obtaining a repeal of the laws so universally detested; and they declared that they could not consider as an unwarrantable combination, a concert of measures to give weight and efficacy to their representations in support of principles they deemed essential to the preservation of the British constitution, and of British liberty.

It is probable that this letter was accompanied with instructions to dissolve such Assemblies as should refuse to comply with its recommendation, as the Assemblies were generally dissolved on taking the same into consideration, and declining to gratify the wish expressed by his lordship respecting the conduct of their sister colony.

When the general court of Massachussetts was again convened, Governor Bernard laid before the house of representatives an extract of a letter from the Earl of Hillsborough, communicating the great concern of his Majesty, that "a house, at the end of a session, should have presumed to revert to and resolve upon a measure of so inflammatory a nature, as that of writing to the other colonies on the subject

ject of their intended representations against some late acts of parliament." After stating the opinion entertained by the crown of this measure, in terms similar to those used in his circular letter, and expressing the opinion that the resolutions were passed by surprise, and against the sense of the Assembly, he declares it to be the king's pleasure, "that the governor should require of the house of representatives, in his Majesty's name, to rescind the resolution which gave birth to the circular letter from the speaker, and to declare their disapprobation of, and dissent from, that rash and hasty proceeding."

This message unavoidably produced a considerable degree of agitation; but without coming to any resolution on it, the house requested the governor to lay before them the whole of the letter of the Earl of Hillsborough, and also copies of such letters as had been written by his Excellency to that nobleman, on the subject to which the message referred.

The letters written by the governor where haughtily refused; but the residue of that from the Earl of Hillsborough was laid before them. That minister says, "If, notwithstanding the apprehensions which may justly be entertained of the ill consequence of a continuance of this factious spirit, which seems to have influenced the resolutions of the assembly at the conclusion of the last session, the new assembly should refuse to comply with his Majesty's reason-

reasonable expectation, it is the king's pleasure that you immediately dissolve them."

In a subsequent part of the letter, the governor is assured that, " a faithful discharge of duty shall not operate to his prejudice, or to the discontinuance of any necessary establishments."

No immediate answer being returned to these communications, the governor pressed the house to a decision on them, adding, that he could " not admit of a much longer delay, without considering it as an answer in the negative."

The next day the house requested a recess, that they might consult their constituents on the requisition made in consequence of the Earl of Hilsborough's letter. This being refused, a letter to the Earl was reported and agreed to by a majority of ninety-three to thirteen, in which they say, " The house are humbly of opinion that a requisition from the throne of this nature, to a British house of commons, has been very unusual; perhaps there has been no such precedent since the revolution. If this be the case, some very aggravated representations of this measure must have been made to his Majesty, to induce him to require of this house to rescind a resolution of a former house, upon pain of forfeiting their existence; for, my lord, the house of representatives duly elected are constituted by the royal charter the representative body of his Majesty's faithful commons of this province in the general assembly.

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They defend, in strong and manly, but decent, terms, their circular letter, and then proceed to say, "An attempt, my lord, to impress the royal mind with a jealousy of his faithful subjects, for which there are no just grounds, is a crime of the most malignant nature, as it tends to disturb and destroy that mutual confidence between the prince and the subject which is the only true basis of public happiness and security. Your lordship, upon inquiry, may find that such base and wicked attempts have been made."

After stating the inexpressible grief of the people of the province to find repeated censures falling on them, "not from ministers of state alone, but from majesty itself," and saying that there was "no evil in life which they felt more sensibly than the displeasure of their sovereign," they state their proceedings relative to the circular letter, so as to shew the propriety and regularity of their conduct on that subject, and say that "the house humbly rely on the royal clemency, that to petition his Majesty will not be deemed by him to be inconsistent with a respect to the British constitution, as settled at the revolution by William III.; that to acquaint their fellow-subjects involved in the same distress, of their having so done in full hopes of success, even if they had invited the union of all America in one joint supplication, would not be discountenanced by our gracious sovereign as a measure of an inflammatory nature; that when your lordship shall in justice lay a true

state of these matters before his Majesty, he will no longer consider them as tending to create unwarrantable combinations, or excite an unjustifiable opposition to the constitutional authority of parliament; that he will then truly discern who are of that desperate faction which is continually disturbing the public tranquillity; and that, while his arm is extended for the protection of his distressed and injured subjects, he will frown upon all those who, to gratify their own passions, have dared to attempt to deceive him."

The question was then put, whether the house would rescind the resolution on which their circular letter was founded? and it passed in the negative by a majority of ninety-two to seventeen.

A letter to the governor was then prepared, stating their motives for refusing to comply with the requisition to rescind their resolution; immediately after receiving which they were prorogued, and the next day they were dissolved by proclamation.

While the opposition was thus conducted by the legislature with temperate firmness, and with the use only of legitimate means, the general irritation occasionally broke out in the town of Boston in acts of violence, denoting evidently that the body of the people, at least in that place, were prepared for much stronger measures than their representatives had pursued.

The seizure of the sloop Liberty, belonging to Mr. Hancock, by the collector and comptroller of

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the customs, occasioned the assemblage of a tumultuous mob, who beat the officers and those who assisted them, took possession of a boat belonging to the collector, which they burnt in triumph, and patrolled the streets for a considerable length of time. The revenue officers, fearing for their safety, took refuge first on board the Romney man of war, and afterwards in Castle William. After a considerable length of time had elapsed, the governor moved the council to take into consideration some measures for restoring vigour and firmness to government. To this application the council made a reply, in which they state, "that the disorders which had happened were occasioned by the violent and unprecedented manner in which the sloop Liberty had been seized by the officers of the customs." And the inhabitants of Boston, in a justificatory memorial, supported by affidavits, say, "the principal occasion of the late tumults arose from the haughty conduct of the commissioners and other officers appointed by them. The Romney man of war, having moored before the town, intimidated the coasting vessels bringing provisions, fire-wood, &c. committed many acts of violence and outrage, and in particular by cutting away a vessel from Mr. Hancock's wharf, and detaining her several days without any legal proceeding filed against her. This irritated the people, who patrolled the streets in a tumultuous manner, broke several windows to the value of about five pounds sterling, burnt a pleasure-

boat belonging to the collector, and then dispersed at about eleven o'clock at night.

A petition, presented to the governor by the inhabitants assembled in a town meeting, a few days after this event, praying the removal of the Romney, after representing the grievances of which the people complained, the remonstrances which had been transmitted to parliament, and the petitions to the throne, proceeds to state that they had waited the effect of these applications with the greatest attention to the public peace, until they found themselves invaded with an armed force, seizing, impressing, and imprisoning the persons of their fellow-subjects, contrary to express acts of parliament.

Menaces, they said, had been thrown out fit only for barbarians, which already affected them in a most serious manner, and threatened them with famine and desolation; as all navigation was obstructed, upon which alone their whole support depended, and the town was at that crisis in a situation nearly such as if war was formally declared against it.

Although the people thus justified, or rather excused, this act of violence, the legislature did not think proper to afford it their countenance. A committee of both houses appointed to inquire into the state of the province, after reprobating in their report the circumstances attending the seizure, to which they attribute the mob which was collected, declare their utter abhorrence and detestation of a procedure which they pronounced to be very criminal; and

desire the governor to direct the attorney-general to prosecute all persons concerned in the riot. They also requested that a proclamation might be issued, offering a reward to any person who should make discoveries, by which the rioters or their abettors might be brought to condign punishment.

This report however, seems to have been rather intended to save appearances, than to have produced any real effect corresponding with the sentiment it expressed. It was perfectly understood that no person would dare to inform, or even to appear as a witness in any prosecution which might be instituted by the attorney general; and, as if completely to prevent further proceedings, several persons, who had been active in producing the riots, were placed on the grand jury for the succeeding term. Suits were afterwards instituted against Mr. Hancock and others, owners of the vessel and cargo; but, as it was thought unsafe to hazard the trial of them, they were never prosecuted to a final decision.

This riot, which completely demonstrated the impracticability of executing by ordinary means the obnoxious laws which government seemed determined to enforce, though it might not occasion, certainly accelerated, a measure which tended in no considerable degree to irritate still further the angry dispositions already so prevalent in Boston.

Representations had already been made by the governor to administration, stating the necessity of stationing a military force in the province for the

protection of the officers employed in collecting the revenue, and of the magistrates in preserving the public peace; and orders to detach at least one regiment on that service had already been given to General Gage, who was directed to select for the command of it an officer on whose prudence, resolution, and integrity, he could entirely rely. The transactions respecting the seizure of the sloop Liberty rendered any attempt to produce a countermand of these orders entirely abortive, and probably was the cause that two regiments instead of one were detached by General Gage.

Before the arrival of this military force, the governor had used expressions intimating that it might be expected; in consequence of which, a committee of the inhabitants was deputed in a town meeting to wait on his excellency, to learn on what the suspicions he had expressed were founded, and also to pray him to convene another general assembly.

The answer of the governor confirmed their fears respecting a military force, though he assured them that he had no official communication on the subject; and contained also the information, that no other assembly could be convoked until his Majesty's commands for that purpose should be received.

It seems to have been supposed that a dissolution of the assembly of Massachussetts would also dissolve the opposition to the measures of administration; and that the people, having no longer constitutional leaders, being no longer excited and conducted

ducted by their representatives, would gradually become quiet, and return to what was termed their duty to government. But the opinions expressed by the house of representatives were the opinions of the reat body of the people, and had taken too deep root to be so readily suppressed. The most active and energetic part of society had embraced them with enthusiasm; and the dissolution of the assembly only created a necessity for devising other, perhaps more efficient, expedients, and hastened a mode of conducting their opposition which was afterwards universally adopted.

The answer of the governor to their message being reported, the meeting immediately proceeded to resolve, "That to levy money within that province by any other authority than that of the general court, was a violation of the royal charter, and of the undoubted natural rights of British subjects.

"That the freeholders and other inhabitants of the town of Boston would, at the peril of their lives and fortunes, take all legal and constitutional measures to defend all and singular the rights, liberties, privileges, and immunities, granted in their royal charter.

"That, as there was an apprehension in the minds of many of an approaching war with France, those inhabitants, who were not provided with arms, should be requested duly to observe the laws of the province, which required that every householder should furnish himself with a complete stand."

They further resolved, "That as the governor did not think proper to call a general court for the redress of their grievances, the town would then make choice of a suitable number of persons to act for them, as a committee in a convention to be held at Faneuil-hall in Boston, with such as might be sent to join them from the several towns in the province."

These votes were, at the desire of the meeting, communicated by the select men in a circular letter to the other towns in the province, which were invited to concur in them, and to elect committeemen, who should meet those of Boston in convention.

The measure was very generally adopted, and a convention assembled, which was regarded with all the respect that could have been paid to a legitimate assembly.

The country in general, though united on the great constitutional question of taxation, was probably not exasperated to the same point with the people of Boston; and the convention appears to have acted with unexpected moderation. They disclaimed all pretensions to any other character than that of mere individuals, assembled, by deputation from the towns, to consult and advise on such measures as might tend to promote the piece and good order of his Majesty's subjects in the province; but without power to pass any authoritative or governmental acts.

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They petitioned the governor to assemble the general court, and addressed a letter to the agent for the province in England, stating the character in which they met, and the motives which brought them together. After expressing their opinions with temper and firmness, on the subjects generally complained of, and recommending to the people patience, and regard to good order, they dissolved themselves, and returned to their respective homes.

The report that the two regiments were ordered to Boston had spread through the country; and some hints which had been thrown out seemed to have created an apprehension, that the more violent part of the town would oppose their landing, and precipitate the province into a civil war.

The day before the convention rose, two British regiments, commanded by Colonel Dalrymple, arrived under convoy in Nantasket road. The application of the governor to the council, to provide quarters for them in Boston, had been rejected, because there were barracks sufficient for their reception in the castle; and by act of parliament the British troops were to be quartered no where else, until those barracks should be full. But a report having prevailed that the people about Boston were in a state of open revolt, General Gage, who had originally directed one regiment to be stationed in the town, transmitted such orders, as, combined with the threats which had been uttered, of opposing the debarkation of the troops, induced the commanding

manding officer to determine to land both regiments in Boston. The fleet, therefore, was put in motion, and took a station which commanded the whole town. The ships of war lay with their broadsides towards the town, with springs on their cables, and their guns ready for firing on the place should any resistance be attempted. These formidable preparations having been made, the troops began to land about one o'clock in the afternoon, under cover of the cannon of their ships. This being effected without experiencing any opposition, they marched into the town with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets, in all that military pomp and parade which indeed are usual on such occasions, but which were believed by the inhabitants to be then displayed for the purposes of intimidation or irritation.

The select men, as well as the council, having refused to provide quarters in town for the troops, the state-house was, by order of the governor, opened for their reception, and they took possession of all the apartments belonging to it, except that which was reserved for the council; and two field-pieces with the main guard were stationed just in its front. The utmost indignation and disgust were excited among the people at seeing the chamber of their representatives filled with regular soldiers, their counsellors surrounded with foreign troops, and their whole city exhibiting the appearance of a garrisoned town. The inhabitants also complained of being challenged as they passed and repassed;

and the devout were disturbed by military music, which often offended their ears during divine service. With the difference of manners between the soldiers and the inhabitants of the town, and the strong prejudices reciprocally entertained against each other, it is not wonderful that personal broils should frequently occur, and mutual antipathies already so strong be still further increased.

While these measures were pursuing in America, every session of parliament was opened with information from the king, that a disposition to refuse obedience to the laws, and to resist the authority of the supreme legislature of the nation, still prevailed among his misguided subjects in some of the colonies. In the addresses answering the speeches from the throne, both houses uniformly expressed their abhorrence of the rebellious spirit manifested in the colonies, and their approbation of the measures taken by his Majesty for the restoration of order and good government.

To give a more solemn expression to the sense of parliament on this subject, joint resolutions* of both

* Resolved, by the lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled, that the votes, resolutions, and proceedings of the house of representatives of Massachussetts Bay, in the months of January and February last, respecting several late acts of parliament, so far as the said votes, resolutions, and proceedings, do import a denial of, or to draw into question, the power and authority of his Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal,

both Houses were at length entered into, condemning in the strongest terms the measures pursued by the

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temporal, and the commons in parliament assembled, to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the colonies and people of America, subjects to the crown of Great Britain, in all cases whatsoever, are illegal, unconstitutional, and derogatory of the rights of the crown and parliament of Great Britain.

Resolved, by the lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled, that the resolution of the said house of representatives of the province of Massachusetts Bay, in January last, to write letters to the several houses of the representatives of the British colonies in the continent, desiring them to join with the said house of representatives of the province of Massachussetts Bay, in petitions which do deny or draw into question the right of parliament to impose duties and taxes upon his Majesty's subjects in America; and in pursuance of the said resolution, the writing such letters, in which certain late acts of parliament imposing duties and taxes are stated to be infringements of the rights of his Majesty's subjects of the said province, are proceedings of a most unwarrantable and dangerous nature, calculated to inflame the minds of his Majesty's subjects in the other colonies, tending to create unlawful combinations repugnant to the laws of Great Britain, and subversive of the constitution.

Resolved by the lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled, that in these circumstances of the province of Massachussetts Bay, and of the town of Boston, the preservation of the public peace, and the due execution of the laws, became impracticable without the aid of a military force to support and protect the civil magistrates and the officers of his Majesty's revenue.

Resolved, by the lords spiritual and temporal, in parliament assembled, that the declarations, resolutions, and proceedings in the town-meeting in Boston, on the fourteenth of June and twelfth of September,

the Americans; and an address was likewise agreed on, approving the conduct of the crown, giving assurances of effectual support to such further measures as might be found necessary to maintain the civil magistrates in a due execution of the laws within theprovince of Massachussetts Bay; and beseeching him to direct the governor of that colony to obtain and transmit to his Majesty, information of all treasons committed in Massachussetts since the year 1767, with the names of the persons who had been most active in promoting such offences, that prosecutions might be instituted against them within the

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September, were illegal and unconstitutional, and calculated to excite sedition and insurrections in his Majesty's province of Massachussetts Bay.

Resolved, by the lords spiritual and temporal, in parliament assembled, that the appointment at the town-meeting of the twelfth of September, of a convention to be held in the town of Boston on the twenty-second of that month, to consist of deputies from the several towns and districts in the province of Massachussetts Bay, and the issuing a precept by the select men of the town of Boston to each of the said towns and districts for the election of such deputies, were proceedings subversive of his Majesty's government, and evidently manifesting a design in the inhabitants of the said town of Boston to set up a new and unconstitutional authority, independent of the crown of Great Britain.

Resolved, by the lords spiritual and temporal, in parliament assembled, that the elections by several towns and districts in the province of Massachussetts Bay, of deputies to sit in the same convention, and the meeting of such convention in consequence thereof, were daring insults offered to his Majesty's authority, and audacious usurpations of the powers of government.

realm,

realm, in pursuance of the statute of the 35th of Henry VIII.

These threatening declarations, which seem to have been particularly directed against Massachussetts Bay*, in the hope that the other provinces might be deterred from involving themselves in her dangers, made no impression on the colonists in any degree favourable to the views of the mother country. Their resolutions to resist the exercise of the authority claimed by Great Britain not only remained unshaken, but manifested itself in a still more determined form.

Not long after these votes of the British parliament, the assembly of Virginia was convened by Lord Bottetourt, a nobleman of the most conciliating and popular manners, who had been recently

* These resolutions originated in the House of Lords, and passed both houses by immense majorities. In the debate in the House of Commons, Mr. Barré commented with great force on their being levelled particularly at Massachussetts, when the offence of resistance was common to all the colonies. He said, "Away with these partial resentful trifles, calculated to irritate, and not to quell or appease, inadequate to their purpose, and unworthy of us! Why will you endeavour to deceive yourselves and us? You know that it is not this place only which disputes your right, but every part. They tell you, that you have no right from one end of the continent to the other. My sentiments of this matter you well know. Consider well what you are doing. Act openly and honestly. Tell them you will tax them, and that they must submit. Do not adopt this little, insidious, futile plan; they will despise you for it."

appointed

appointed Governor of that colony. A copy of the proceedings having already been received, the House took into their immediate consideration the state of the colony and passed, unanimously, several resolutions, asserting in the most decisive terms the exclusive right of that assembly to impose taxes on the inhabitants within his Majesty's dominion of Virginia, and their undoubted right to petition for a redress of grievances, and to obtain a concurrence of the other colonies in such petitions. Alluding particularly to the joint address of the two houses to the king, they also resolved, that all persons charged with the commission of any offence within that colony, were entitled to a trial before the tribunals of the country, according to the fixed and known course of proceeding therein; and that to seize such persons and transport them beyond sea for trial, derogated in a high degree from the rights of British subjects; as thereby the inestimable privilege of being tried by a jury from the vicinage, as well as the liberty of summoning and producing witnesses on such trial, would be taken away from the party accused.

An address* to his Majesty was also agreed on, which states, in the style of loyalty and real attachment

* This address manifests so clearly the then real temper of a colony which took a very active part in the contest with the mother country, that it cannot be entirely unacceptable to the reader.

To

ment to the crown, the deep conviction of the house of burgesses of Virginia, that the complaints of the colonists were well founded.

Intelligence

To the King's most excellent Majesty:

The humble address of his dutiful and loyal subjects of the house of burgesses of his Majesty's ancient colony of Virginia, met in general assembly.

May it please your Majesty,

We your Majesty's most loyal, dutiful, and affectionate subjects, the house of burgesses of this your Majesty's ancient colony of Virginia, now met in general assembly, beg leave in the humblest manner to assure your Majesty, that your faithful subjects of this colony, ever distinguished by their loyalty and firm attachment to your Majesty, and your royal ancestors, far from countenancing traitors, treasons, or misprisions of treasons, are ready at any time to sacrifice our lives and fortunes in defence of your Majesty's sacred person and government.

It is with the deepest concern and most heartfelt grief that your Majesty's dutiful subjects of this colony find that their loyalty has been traduced, and that those measures, which a just regard for the British constitution (dearer to them than life) made necessary duties, have been represented as rebellious attacks upon your Majesty's government.

When we consider that by the established laws and constitution of this colony, the most ample provision is made for apprehending and punishing all those who shall dare to engage in any treasonable practices against your Majesty, or disturb the tranquillity of government, we cannot without horror think of the new, unusual, and, permit us with all humility to add, unconstitutional and illegal mode recommended to your Majesty, of seizing and carrying beyond sea the inhabitants of America suspected of any crime, and trying such persons in any other manner than by the ancient and long-established course of proceeding. For how truly deplo-

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Intelligence of these proceedings having reached the governor, he suddenly dissolved* the assembly, the

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rable must be the case of a wretched American, who, having incurred the displeasure of any one in power, is dragged from his native home, and his dearest domestic connections, thrown into a prison, not to await his trial before a court, jury, or judges, from a knowledge of whom he is encouraged to hope for speedy justice, but to exchange his imprisonment in his own country for fetters among strangers! conveyed to a distant land, where no friend, no relation, will alleviate his distresses, or minister to his necessities, and where no witness can be found to testify his innocence; shunned by the reputable and honest, and consigned to the society and converse of the wretched and the abandoned, he can only pray that he may soon end his misery with his life.

"Truly alarmed at the fatal tendency of those pernicious counsels, and with hearts filled with anguish by such dangerous invasions of our dearest privileges, we presume to prostrate ourselves at the foot of your royal throne, beseeching your Majesty, as our king and father, to avert from your faithful and loyal subjects of America, those miseries which must necessarily be the consequence of such measures.

"After expressing our firm confidence of your royal wisdom and goodness, permit us to assure your Majesty, that the most fervent prayers of your people of this colony are daily addressed to the Almighty, that your Majesty's reign may be long and prosperous over Great Britain, and all your dominions; and that after death your Majesty may taste the fullest fruition of eternal bliss, and that a descendant of your illustrious house may reign over the extended British empire until time shall be no more."—*Vide Virginia Gazette, May* 18, 1769.

* The manner of dissolving this assembly was long recollected in Virginia. The governor, suddenly appearing, addressed them in

the members of which then convened at a private house; and, having chosen their speaker moderator, proceeded to form a non-importing agreement, which was signed by every person present, and which, being recommended by them to the people, was subscribed almost universally throughout the province.

From the commencement of the controversy, the opinion seems to have prevailed extensively throughout the colonies, that the most effectual means of succeeding in the struggle in which they were engaged, were those which would interest the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain in their favour. Associations had therefore been set on foot in Massachussetts, as early as the beginning of May, 1768, for the non-importation of goods from that country. The merchants of some of the trading towns in the other colonies, especially those of Philadelphia, although perfectly according with their countrymen in opposing the claims of the mother country, refused at that time to concur in a measure which they deemed too strong for the existing state of things, and it was for the moment laid aside. But in the beginning of August it was resumed in Boston; and the merchants of that place, generally

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in these words: "Mr. Speaker and gentlemen of the House of Burgesses, I have heard of your resolves, and augur ill of their effects. You have made it my duty to dissolve you, and you are dissolved accordingly."

entered into an agreement not to import from Great Britain any articles whatever, except a few of the first necessity, between the 1st of January, 1769, and the 1st of January, 1770; and not to import tea, glass, paper, or painters' colours, until the duties imposed on those articles should be taken off.

This agreement was soon afterwards adopted in the town of Salem, the city of New York, and the province of Connecticut; but was not, however, generally entered into through the colonies, until the resolutions and address of the two houses of parliament, which have already been mentioned, seemed to cut off the hope that petitions and memorials would alone effect the object for which they contended. The proceedings of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, which took place very soon after the intelligence of those resolutions and that address had reached America, were, by order of the house, transmitted by their speaker to the speakers of the several assemblies throughout the continent. The occasion seemed, in the opinion of the neighbouring colonies, to require measures of greater energy than had heretofore been adopted; and an association, similar to that which had been formed by their elder sister, was entered into by Maryland, and north and south Carolina. The inhabitants of Charleston went so far as to break off all connection with Rhode Island and Georgia, the inhabitants of which colonies they charged with having acted a part most singularly infamous, from the commencement of

the present glorious struggle for the preservation of American rights. This vigorous measure was probably not without its influence, as those provinces soon afterwards entered into the agreements which had now become common throughout America.

In Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, where Mr. Wentworth, a very popular governor, possessed great influence, there was also discovered a considerable degree of reluctance in adopting this measure; but being threatened with a suspension of their whole intercourse with the other colonies, the merchants of that place likewise, following the example so generally set them, joined in an association similar to that which had been elsewhere very generally adopted.

All ranks and conditions of persons united in giving effect to this agreement. The utmost exertions were used to improve the manufactures of the country; and the fair sex, laying aside the late fashionable ornaments of England, exulted with patriotic pride in appearing dressed with the produce of their own looms. Committees chosen by the people superintended every where the importations which were made, and the force of public opinion secured, in a great degree, from violation, the associations which had been formed.

The situation of Massachusetts rendering a legislative grant of money necessary for the purposes of government, the general court of that province was again convened. The members of the former House

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of Representatives were generally re-elected, and brought with them the temper which had occasioned their dissolution. Discovering no disposition to enter on the business for which they were called together, they immediately engaged in a controversy with the governor*, concerning the removal of the ships of war from the harbour, and troops from the town, of Boston, which, as the representative of the crown, they insisted on his power to do.

In the expectation that, by removing the general

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* This contest is thus stated by Mr. Gordon:—"The general court being called together according to charter, a committee from the House of Representatives remonstrated to his excellency, 'That an armament by sea and land investing this metropolis *(Boston,)* and a military guard with cannon pointed at the door of the State House, where the assembly is held, are inconsistent with that dignity and freedom with which they have a right to deliberate, consult, and determine. They expect that your excellency will, as his Majesty's representative, give effectual orders for the removal of the above mentioned forces by sea and land out of this port, and the gates of this city, during the sessions of the said assembly.' The governor returned for answer—'Gentlemen, I have no authority over his Majesty's ships in this port, or his troops in this town.' A few days after receiving this answer, the house in a message to him, declared—'The use of the military power to enforce the execution of the laws, is, in the opinion of this house, inconsistent with the spirit of a free constitution, and the very nature of government. The military force is uncontrollable by any authority in the province; it is then a power without any check here, and therefore it is so far absolute. What privilege, what security then is left to this house?'"

GORDON'S *History of the American War*, vol. i. p. 259.

court from a place where the members were, by the great influence of the metropolis, excited to and supported in the system they had adopted, they might be induced to enter on the ordinary business of the country, the governor adjourned them to meet at Cambridge.

Far from producing the intended effect, this measure served to increase the existing irritation. The business recommended to them remained some time unnoticed; their altercations with the governor continued; and they entered into several warm resolutions*, enlarging the catalogue of grievances, and

* The following are the resolutions alluded to:

The general assembly of this his Majesty's colony of Massachusetts Bay, convened by his Majesty's authority, by virtue of his writ, issued by his excellency the governor, under the great seal of the province, and this house, thinking it their duty at all times to testify their loyalty to his Majesty, as well as their regard to the rights, liberties, and privileges of themselves and their constituents do pass the following resolutions, to be entered on the records of the house:

Resolved, That this house do, and ever will, bear the firmest allegiance to our rightful sovereign King George III. and are ever ready with their lives and fortunes to defend his Majesty's person, family, crown, and dignity.

Resolved, That this house do concur in and adhere to, the resolution of the House of Representatives in the year 1765, and particularly in that essential principle, that no man can be taxed, or bound in conscience to obey any law to which he has not given his consent in person or by his representative.

Resolved, as the opinion of this house, That it is the indubitable right

and expressed in terms of infinitely greater exasperation than had heretofore appeared in the official acts of any legislature on the continent.

Not

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right of the subject in general, and consequently of the colonies jointly or severally, to petition the king for redress of grievances; and that it is lawful, whenever they think it expedient, to confer with each other, in order to procure a joint concurrence in dutiful addresses for the relief of their common burthens.

Resolved, That Governor Bernard, in wantonly dissolving the last year's assembly, and in refusing to call another, though repeatedly requested by the people, acted against the spirit of a free constitution; and if such procedure be lawful, it may be in his power, whenever he pleases, to make himself absolute.

Resolved, That at a time when there was a general discontent on account of the revenue acts, an expectation of the sudden arrival of a military power to enforce the execution of those acts, a dread of the troops being quartered upon the inhabitants, when our petitions were not permitted to reach the royal ear; the general court at such a juncture dissolved, and the governor's refusing to call a new one, and the people thereby reduced almost to a state of despair; at such a time it was innocent, if not highly expedient and necessary, for the people to convene by their committees, in order to associate, consult, and advise the best means to promote peace and order, and by all lawful ways to endeavour to have their united complaints laid before the throne, and jointly to pray for the royal interposition in favour of our violated rights; nor can this procedure possibly be conceived to be illegal, as they expressly disclaimed all governmental acts.

Resolved, as the opinion of this house, That Governor Bernard, in his letters to Lord Hillsborough, his Majesty's secretary of state, has given a false and highly injurious representation of the conduct of his Majesty's truly loyal and faithful council of this colony, and of the magistrates, overseers of the poor, and inhabitants of

Not long after the passing of these resolutions, the house explicitly refused to make the provision required

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the town of Boston, tending to bring on these respectable bodies, and especially on some individuals, the unmerited displeasure of our gracious sovereign, to introduce a military government into the province, and to mislead both houses of parliament into such severe resolutions, as a true, just, and candid statement of facts must have prevented.

Resolved, That Governor Bernard, in the letters before mentioned, by falsely representing that it was become "necessary the king should have the council chamber in his own hands, and should be enabled by parliament to supersede, by order in his privy council, commissions granted in his name, and under his seal, throughout the colonies," has discovered his enmity to the true spirit of the British constitution, and to the liberties of the colonies, and particularly has meditated a blow at the root of some of the most invaluable constitutional and charter rights of this province; the perfidy of which, at the very time he was professing himself a warm friend of the charter, is altogether unparalleled by any person in his station, and ought never to be forgotten.

Resolved, That the establishing a standing army in this colony, in a time of peace, without the consent of the General Assembly of the same, is an invasion of the natural rights of the people, as well as those which they claim as free-born Englishmen, and which are confirmed by Magna Charta, and the Bill of Rights, as settled at the revolution, and by the charter of this province.

Resolved, That a standing army is not known as a part of the British constitution in any of the king's dominions; and every attempt to establish it as such has ever been deemed a dangerous innovation, and manifestly tending to enslave the people.

Resolved, That the sending an armed force into this colony, under a pretence of aiding and assisting the civil authority, is

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required by the mutiny act for the troops stationed in Massachussetts; and this being the object for which

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an endeavour to establish a standing army here without our consent, and highly dangerous to this people, as well as unprecedented and unconstitutional.

His Excellency General Gage, in his letter to Lord Hillsborough, October 31st, having, among other exceptionable things, expressed himself in the following words:—"From what has been said, your lordship will conclude that there has been no government in Boston; in truth, there is very little at present, and the constitution of this province leans so much to the side of democracy, that the governor has not the power to remedy the disorders that happen in it."

Resolved, as the opinion of this house, That his Excellency General Gage, in this and other assertions, has rashly and impertinently intermeddled in the civil affairs of this province, which are altogether out of his department; and in the internal police of which, by his letter, if not altogether his own, he has yet betrayed a degree of ignorance equal to the malice of the author.

With respect to the nature of our government, This house is of opinion that the wisdom of that great prince William III. who gave the charter, aided by an able ministry, men thoroughly versed in the English constitution and law, together with the happy effects that have been derived from it to the nation as well as this colony, did place it above the reprehension of the general, and should have led to inquire, whether the disorders complained of have not originated from an arbitrary disposition in the governor, rather than from too great a spirit of democracy in the people.

And this house cannot but express their concern, that too many in power, both at home and abroad, so clearly avow, not only in private conversation, but in their public conduct, the most rancorous enmity against the free part of the British constitution, and are indefatigable in their endeavours to render the monarchy absolute, and

which they were most especially convened, they were prorogued till the first of January.

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and the administration arbitrary in every part of the British empire.

Resolved, That this house, after the most careful inquiry, have not found any instance of the course of justice being interrupted by violence, even before a single magistrate, nor of any magistrate refusing to inquire into or redress any complaint properly laid before him, while it is notorious to all the world, that even such acts of parliament as have been declared by the whole continent highly oppressive, have been so far from being opposed with violence, that the duties imposed, and rigorously exacted, have been punctually paid.

Resolved, That the fining in the small sum of ten pounds only, a high-handed offender, viz. one Fellowes, in the county of Essex, who by force and with fire-arms loaded with ball and swan shot, rescued a prisoner lawfully taken by the sheriff of the said county, is a grievance, and tends to the encouragement of such crimes for the future.

Resolved, That the frequently entering *noli prosequi* by the attorney and advocate general, in cases favourable to the liberty of the subject, and rigorous prosecutions by information and otherwise in those in favour of power, is a daring breach of trust, and an insupportable grievance on the people.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this house, that all trials for treasons, misprison of treason, or for any felony or crime whatsoever committed or done in his Majesty's said colony, by any person or persons residing therein, ought of right to be had and conducted in and before his Majesty's courts, held within the said colony, according to the fixed and known course of proceeding; and that the seizing any person or persons residing in this colony, suspected of any crime whatsoever committed therein, and sending such person or persons to places beyond the sea, to be

tried,

The committees appointed to examine the cargoes of vessels arriving from Great Britain, in order to prevent any breach of the association, went on to execute the trust reposed in them. Votes of censure were passed on such as refused to concur in that agreement, or violated its principles; and the names of the offenders were published in the newspapers, as enemies to their country. In some cases, the goods imported in contravention of it were locked up in warehouses, to prevent their being sold, and in some few instances they were reshipped to Great Britain.

Not long after the strong resolutions which have been noticed were agreed to by parliament, while their effect was unfolding itself in every part of the American continent, a disposition more conciliatory than had been heretofore manifested found its way into the cabinet of St. James's. The Duke of Grafton was placed at the head of the administration, and supported, with great earnestness, a proposition for the repeal of all the duties imposed for the purpose of raising a revenue in the colonies. This moderate and judicious measure he was unable completely to carry. It was thought indispensable to the maintenance of the legislative supremacy of

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tried, is highly derogatory of the rights of British subjects, as thereby the inestimable privilege of being tried by a jury from the vicinage, as well as the liberty of summoning and producing witnesses on such trial, will be taken away from the party accused.—*Virginia Gazette for* 1769.

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Great Britain, to retain the duty on some one article; and that on tea was reserved, while the others were relinquished.

Never perhaps did a great and wise nation adopt a more ill-judged measure than this. The contest with America was plainly a contest of principle, and had been conducted entirely on principle by both sides. The amount of taxes proposed to be raised, was too inconsiderable to have been deemed by either of sufficient consequence to induce them to hazard on that account the consequences already produced. But the principle was, in the opinion of both, of the utmost magnitude. The measure now proposed for conciliation, while it encouraged in the Americans the hope that their cause was gaining strength in Britain, had no tendency to remove the ground of contest. Their opposition had been founded on the conviction, that the right to tax them was vested exclusively in themselves; and while this measure was thought to evidence the effect already produced by that opposition, it left in full force all the motives which originally produced it.

In pursuance of this resolution of the cabinet, a circular letter was written by the earl of Hillsborough to the different governors, informing them, "that it was the intention of his Majesty's ministers to propose, in the next session of parliament, to take off the duties on glass, paper, and painters' colours, on consideration of such duties having been

been laid contrary to the true spirit of commerce; and assuring them that at no time had they entertained the design to propose to parliament to lay any further taxes on America for the purpose of raising a revenue."

This measure having been communicated in letters from persons in England to their correspondents in Massachussetts, and apprehension being entertained that an improper opinion concerning its operation might be formed, a meeting of the merchants and traders in Boston was held, in which it was resolved, that the partial repeal of the duties did not remove the difficulties under which their trade laboured; was only calculated to relieve the manufactures of Great Britain; and that they would still rigidly adhere to their non-importation agreement.

The communication which had been received by the governors from the Earl of Hillsborough, of the intended application to parliament for the repeal of the duties on glass, paper, and painters' colours, was made to the several legislatures as they convened*, in terms implying an intention to renounce the

* Lord Bottetourt, in communicating the assurances of ministers to the Assembly of Virginia, added, "It is my firm opinion, that the plan which I have stated will take place, and that it will never be departed from. I shall exert every power with which I am or ever may be legally invested, in order to obtain and maintain, for the continent of America, that satisfaction which I have been

the imposition of any future taxes on America. But this communication seems no where to have restored perfect content.

The Virginia legislature was in session on its arrival, and Lord Bottetourt, the governor, laid it before them. They voted as a protest, manifesting their dissatisfaction with it, a petition to the king, asserting the rights they had heretofore maintained; and, as individuals, immediately signed an association, in which they were joined by several respectable merchants of the country, then met at Williamsburg, by which they renewed their non importation agreement, with respect to certain enumerated articles not of absolute necessity, and engaged to continue it till the duty on tea should be repealed.

Yet several causes combined to render a general observance of the non-importation agreement extremely difficult: the sacrifice of interest made by the merchants was too great to be continued but under the influence of very powerful motives. Suspicions were entertained of each other in the same towns; and committees to superintend the conduct of importers were charged with gross partiality, in permitting some persons to sell goods

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been authorised to promise this day by the confidential servants of our gracious sovereign, who, to my certain knowledge, rates his honour so high that he would rather part with his crown than preserve it by deceit."

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contrary to their engagements, while others, not more culpable, were held up to the public as enemies to their country. The different commercial towns, likewise, watched each other with no inconsiderable degree of jealousy, and accusations were reciprocally made of infractions to a great extent of the association they had so solemnly pledged themselves to observe. Letters, purporting to be from England, were published, stating that large orders for goods had been received; and the inconvenience resulting from even the partial interruption of commerce which had taken place, and the want of those British manufactures which the inhabitants had been accustomed to use, began to be severely and extensively felt. In Rhode Island and Albany it was determined to import as usual, with the restriction only of such articles as should be subject to duty. On the remonstrances of other commercial places, especially at Boston, these resolutions were changed, and the hope was entertained that the general system on which the colonies relied for success in their opposition to the scheme of establishing the right in Britain to tax them, would still be adhered to.

These hopes were blasted by New York: that town at first determined to import as usual, with the exception only of articles subject to the duty, provided the large commercial towns of Boston and Philadelphia would accede to the proposi-

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These towns refused to depart from the non-importation agreement, and strenuously urged their brethren of New York to persevere with them in the glorious struggle. On receiving this answer, it was communicated to the people, and their opinion on the question of rescinding or adhering to the non-importation agreement was taken in their respective wards; when a decided majority was found in favour of importing generally, with the single exception of such articles as might be subject to duty. This determination was immediately communicated, and excited in New England and Philadelphia the most lively chagrin. Their remonstrances against it were, however, ineffectual; and the agreement, thus openly departed from in New York, was soon universally abandoned. The association was now confined to the single article of tea.

In justification of themselves, it was alleged by the people of New York, that the towns of New England had not fairly observed their engagements, and that the merchants of Albany had been in the practice of receiving goods from Quebec.

No sufficient evidence in support of these assertions was ever adduced: but it is certain that extreme difficulty attended a perseverance in the plan which had been adopted. Independent of the privations to which the associations were exposed, of the great loss encountered by the merchants, whose business was suspended; it was not easy to surmount the

the obstacles which opposed themselves to a continued union, in the same measure, of rival towns jealous of the commercial prosperity of each other, and conscious that, if the agreement should be evaded by others, ruin must be the fate of those who should adhere to it.

About this time a circumstance occurred which threatened, for the moment, effects the most extensively serious. The two regiments stationed in Boston, to support, as was said, the execution of civil power and preserve the peace of the town, could not fail to be viewed by the inhabitants with very prejudiced eyes. Frequent quarrels arose between them; and at length an affray took place in the night, near the gates of their barracks, which brought out Captain Preston, the officer of the day, with a part of the main guard, between whom and some young men blows ensued; on which they fired, and four of the people were killed.

The alarm bells were immediately rung, the drums beat to arms, and an immense multitude assembled, who, inflamed to madness by the view of the dead bodies, were with some difficulty restrained from rushing on the twenty-ninth regiment, which was then drawn up under arms in King-street. By the exertions of the lieutenant-governor, who promised that the laws should be enforced on the perpetrators of the act, and by the efforts of several individuals of respectability and influence, they were prevailed on

to disperse, after the regiment had been marched to the barracks. Captain Preston and the soldiers who had fired were committed to prison for trial; and on the next day upwards of four thousand persons assembled at Faneuil Hall, and addressed to the lieutenant governor a message, stating it to be "the unanimous opinion of the meeting, that the inhabitants and soldiers can no longer live together in safety; that nothing can rationally be expected to restore the peace of the town, and prevent further blood and carnage, but the immediate removal of the troops; and they, therefore, most fervently prayed his honour, that his power and influence might be exerted for their instant removal."

In answer to the message, the lieutenant-governor expressed his extreme sorrow at the melancholy event which had taken place, and declared that he had taken measures to have the affair inquired into, and justice done; that the military were not under his command, but received their orders from the general at New York, which orders it was not in his power to countermand; that, on the application of the council for the removal of the troops, Colonel Dalrymple, their commanding officer, had engaged that the twenty-ninth regiment, which had been concerned in the affair, should be marched to the castle, and there placed in barracks till further orders could be received from the general; that the main guard should be removed; and the fourteenth regiment so disposed of, and laid under such restraint

straint, that all occasions of future disturbance should be removed.

This answer was voted to be unsatisfactory; and a committee was immediately deputed to wait on the lieutenant-governor, and inform him that nothing less than an immediate and total removal of the troops could satisfy them.

This vote was laid before the council by Mr. Hutchinson, who had succeeded Mr. Bernard in the government of the province. The council declared themselves unanimously of opinion, "that it was absolutely necessary for his Majesty's service, the good order of the town, and the peace of the province, that the troops should be immediately removed out of the town of Boston."

This opinion and advice were made known to Colonel Dalrymple, who gave his honour that measures should be immediately taken for their removal, and that no unnecessary delay should be practised. Highly gratified with this assurance, the meeting secured the tranquillity of the town, by appointing a strong military watch, and immediately dissolved.

This transaction was very differently related by the different parties concerned in it. Mr. Gordon whose history was written when the resentments of the moment had subsided, and who appears to have carefully collected the facts of the case, states it in such a manner, as very nearly, if not entirely, to exculpate the military characters concerned in it. It

would appear that an attack upon the soldiers, probably in the belief that only the loss of lives could occasion their removal from the town, had been premeditated; and that, after being long insulted with the grossest language, they were repeatedly assaulted by the mob with balls of ice and snow, and with sticks, before they were induced to fire. This representation receives strong support from the circumstance that Captain Preston, after a very long and public trial, was acquitted by a Boston jury; and that of the eight soldiers who were prosecuted, six were acquitted, and the remaining two found guilty, not of murder, but of manslaughter only. Mr. Quincy and Mr. John Adams, two very eminent lawyers, and distinguished leaders of the patriotic party, consented to defend Captain Preston and the soldiers, and, by doing so, sustained no diminution of their influence. Yet this event was very differently understood through the colonies. It was generally believed to be a massacre equally barbarous and unprovoked, and increased in no inconsiderable degree the detestation in which the soldiers stationed among the people were every where held.

In the middle and southern colonies, the irritation against the mother country appears to have subsided in a considerable degree; and no disposition was manifested to extend their opposition further than to defeat the collection of the revenue, by entirely preventing

preventing the importation of tea. Their attention was a good deal taken up by an insurrection in North Carolina, where a number of ignorant people, supposing themselves to be aggrieved by the fee bill, rose in arms for the purpose of shutting up the courts of justice, destroying all officers of government and all lawyers, and of overturning the government itself. Governor Tryon marched against them; and having, in a decisive battle, totally defeated them, the insurrection was quelled, and order restored.

In Massachussetts, where very high notions of American rights had long prevailed, and where the doctrine, that the British parliament had no right to legislate for the Americans, was already maintained as a corollary from the proposition that the British parliament could not tax them; a gloomy discontent with the existing state of things was every where manifested. That the spirit of opposition lately excited, seemed expiring, without having established on a secure and solid basis the rights they claimed, produced, in the bosoms of that inflexible people, apprehensions of a much more serious nature than would have been created by any conflicts with which they could be threatened. This temper displayed itself in all their proceedings. The legislature had been removed from Boston, its usual place of sitting, to Cambridge, where the governor still continued to convene them. They remonstrated against this

as an intolerable grievance, and for two sessions refused to do business. In one of these remonstrances they insisted on the right of the people to appeal to Heaven in disputes between them and persons in power, when those in power shall abuse it.

When assembled in September, the general court was informed by the governor, that his Majesty had ordered the provincial garrison in the castle to be withdrawn, and regular troops to succeed them. This they declared to be so essential an alteration of their constitution, as justly to alarm a free people.

From the commencement of the contest, Massachussetts appears to have deeply felt the importance of uniting all the colonies in one system of measures; and in pursuance of this favourite idea, a committee of correspondence was at this session elected to communicate with such committees as might be appointed by other colonies. Similar committees were soon afterwards chosen by the different towns* throughout

* An account of the origin of these committees, and of their mode of proceeding, is thus given by Mr. Gordon, and is not unworthy of attention: "Governor Hutchinson and his adherents having been used to represent the party in opposition, as only an uneasy factious few in Boston, while the body of the people were quite contented; Mr. Samuel Adams was thereby induced to visit Mr. James Warren of Plymouth. After conversing upon the subject, the latter proposed to originate and establish committees of correspondence

throughout the province, for the purpose of corresponding with each other, and of expressing, in some

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correspondence in the several towns of the colony, in order to learn the strength of the friends to the rights of the continent, and to unite and increase their force. Mr. Samuel Adams returned to Boston, pleased with the proposal, and communicated the same to his confidants. Some doubted whether the measure would prosper, and dreaded a disappointment, which might injure the cause of liberty; but it was concluded to proceed. The prime managers were about six in number, each of whom, when separate, headed a division; the several individuals of which collected and led distinct subdivisions. In this manner the political engine has been constructed. The different parts are not equally good and operative. Like other bodies, its composition includes numbers who act mechanically, as they are pressed this way or that way by those who judge for them; and divers of the wicked, fitted for evil practices, when the adoption of them is thought necessary to particular purposes, and a part of whose creed it is, that in political matters the public good is above every other consideration; and that all rules of morality, when in competition with it, may be safely dispensed with. When any important transaction is to be brought forward, it is thoroughly considered by the prime managers. If they approve, each communicates it to his own division: from thence, if adopted, it passes to the several subdivisions, which form a general meeting in order to canvass the business. The prime managers, being known only by few to be the promoters of it, are desired to be present at the debate, that they may give their opinion when it closes. If they observe that the collected body is in general strongly against the measure they wish to have carried, they declare it to be improper: is it opposed by great numbers, but not warmly, they advise a reconsideration at another meeting,

some degree, officially, the sentiments of the people. Their reciprocal communications were well calculated

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and prepare for its being then adopted: if the opposition is not considerable either in number or weight of persons, they give their reasons, and then recommend the adoption of the measure. The principal actors are determined on securing the liberties of their country, or perish in the attempt.'

"The news of his Majesty's granting salaries to the justices of the superior court afforded them a fair opportunity for executing the plan of establishing committees of correspondence through the colony. The most spirited pieces were published, and an alarm spread, that the granting such salaries tended rapidly to complete the system of their slavery.

"A town meeting was called, and a committee of correspondence appointed to write circular letters to all the towns in the province, and to induce them to unite in measures. The committee made a report, containing several resolutions contradictory to the supremacy of the British legislature. After setting forth, that all men have a right to remain in a state of nature as long as they please, they proceed to a report upon the natural rights of the colonists, as men, Christians, and subjects; and then form a list of infringements and violations of their rights. They enumerate and dwell upon the British parliament's having assumed the power of legislation for the colonies in all cases whatsoever—the appointment of a number of new officers to superintend the revenues—the granting of salaries out of the American revenue, to the governor, the judges of the superior court, the king's attorney and solicitor general. The report was accepted, copies printed, and six hundred circulated through the towns and districts of the province, with a pathetic letter addressed to the inhabitants; who were called

ed to keep up the spirit, which was general through the colony. The example was afterwards followed by other colonies, and the utility of this institution became apparent, when a more active opposition was rendered necessary.

Although the governor, judges, and other high colonial officers had been appointed by the crown, they had hitherto depended on the provincial legislatures for their salaries: and this dependence had always been highly valued, as giving to the colonies an important influence on their conduct. It has been already seen how perseveringly this source of influence was maintained by Massachussetts on a former occasion. As a part of the new system, it had been determined that the salaries of these offi-

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upon not to doze any longer, or sit supinely indifferent, while the iron hand of oppression was daily tearing the choicest fruits from the fair tree of liberty. The circular letter requested of each town a free communication of sentiments on the subjects of the report, and was directed to the select men, who were desired to lay the same before a town meeting; which has been generally practised, and the proceedings of the town upon the business have been transmitted to the committee at Boston. This committee have their particular correspondents in the several towns, who, upon receiving any special information, are ready to spread it with dispatch among the inhabitants. It consists of twenty-one persons of heterogeneous qualities and professions," &c.

GORDON's *History of the American War*, vol. i. p. 312.

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cers should be fixed by the crown, and paid without the intervention of the legislature. This measure was adopted in relation to all the royal governments, and was communicated to the general court of Massachussetts in May. It gave high offence, and was declared by the House of Representatives to be an infraction of the rights of the inhabitants granted them by charter*.

About this time a discovery was made, which very greatly increased the ill temper already so prevalent throughout New England. Dr. Franklin, the agent for several of the colonies, and among others for Massachussetts, by some unknown means, obtained possession of the letters which had been addressed by Governor Hutchinson, and by Lieutenant-Governor Oliver, to the department of state.

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* "A committee having been appointed to consider the matter of the governor's support being provided for by the king, reported and observed, that the king's providing for the support of the governor is a most dangerous innovation. It is a measure, whereby not only the right of the general assembly of this province is rescinded, but the highest indignity is thrown upon it. It is an infraction of the charter in a material point, whereby a most important trust is wrested out of the hands of the general assembly. And the house, the same day, declared, by a message to the governor, that the making provision for his excellency's support, independent of the grants and acts of the general assembly, and his excellency receiving the same, is an infraction upon the rights of the inhabitants granted by the royal charter."—GORDON, vol. i. p. 310

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These letters, many of which were private, he transmitted to the general court. They were obviously designed, and well calculated, to induce a perseverance on the part of the government in the system which had so greatly tended to alienate the affections of the colonies. The opposition was represented to be confined to a few factious turbulent men, whose conduct was by no means generally approved, and who had been emboldened by the weakness of the means used to restrain them. More vigorous measures were recommended, and several specific propositions, peculiarly offensive to the colony, were made, among which was the alteration of their charters, and the rendering the high officers dependent solely on the crown for their salaries.

Inflamed by these letters, the assembly unanimously resolved, "That their tendency and design were to overthrow the constitution of the government, and to introduce arbitrary power into the province." At the same time a petition to the king was voted, praying him to remove Governor Hutchinson and Lieutenant Governor Oliver, for ever, from the government of the colony. This petition was transmitted to Dr. Franklin, and laid before the king in council, where it was heard; and in a few days the lords of the council reported, "that the petition in question was founded upon false and erroneous allegations; and that the same is groundless, vexatious, and scandalous, and calculated only for the

the seditious purposes of keeping up a spirit of clamour and discontent in the provinces." This report his Majesty was pleased to approve. Governor Hutchinson, however, was soon afterwards removed, and General Gage appointed to succeed him.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER III.

Measures to enforce the Act concerning Duties—Ferment excited in America—The Tea is thrown into the Sea at Boston—Measures of Parliament—General Enthusiasm in America—A general Congress is proposed—General Gage arrives in Boston—Troops stationed on Boston Neck—New Counsellors and Judges—Obliged to resign—Boston Neck fortified—Military Stores seized by General Gage—Preparations for Defence in Massachussetts—King's Speech in Parliament—Proceedings of that Body—Battle of Lexington—Vote of Massachussetts for raising Men—Meeting of Congress—Proceedings of that Body—Battle of Breed's Hill.

THE fears entertained by Massachussetts, that the spirit of opposition which had been roused in the colonies might gradually subside, were not permitted to be of long continuance. The determination of the colonies not to import tea from England, had so lessened the demand for that article, that a very considerable quantity had accumulated in

in the magazines of the East India Company. They urged the minister to take off the import American duty of three-pence per pound, and offered, in lieu of it, to pay double that sum on exportation. This fair opportunity for accommodation was rejected, and either as a mere indulgence to the company, or with the intent to give operation to their revenue system in America, drawbacks were allowed on tea exported to the colonies, and the duty on that article exported by the company was entirely taken off. After these encouragements had been held forth, the company (not without some hesitation, and, as is understood, assurances from government that they should in no event be permitted to sustain a loss,) proceeded to make shipments to the colonies on their own account. Large quantities were consigned to agents in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Charleston, and other principal places on the continent.

The crisis now approached; and the conduct of the colonies, in this precise point of time, was to determine, whether they would submit to be taxed by the British parliament, or meet the consequences of a practical application, to their situation, of the opinions they had maintained. If the tea should be landed, it would be sold; the duties would consequently be paid, and the precedent for taxing them established; the opposition to which would, it was feared, become every day less and less. The same sentiment on this subject appears to have pervaded the

the whole continent at the same time. This ministerial plan of importation was every where considered as a direct attack on the liberties of the people of America, which it was the duty of all to oppose. A violent ferment was every where excited; the corresponding committees were extremely active; and it was almost universally declared that whoever should, directly or indirectly, countenance this dangerous invasion of their rights, was an enemy to his country. The consignees were generally compelled to relinquish their appointments; and in most instances, the ships bringing the tea were obliged to return with it. In Charleston, after much opposition, the tea was permitted to be landed, but was immediately lodged in damp cellars, where it long remained, and was finally spoiled.

At Boston, the people in a meeting adopted the spirited resolutions, which had before been entered into Philadelphia, and appointed a committee to wait on the consignees to request their resignation. This request not being complied with, another large meeting* assembled at Faneuil Hall, where it was voted

* The language said by Mr. Gordon to have been used at this meeting, proves many of the people of Boston to have been already ripe for the revolution. To the more cautious among *the sons of liberty*, who had some apprehensions lest they should push the

voted with acclamations, "that the tea shall not be landed, that no duty shall be paid, and that it shall be sent back in the same bottoms." With a foreboding of the probable consequences of the measure about to be adopted, and a wish that those consequences should be seriously contemplated, a leading member* thus addressed the meeting :

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the matter too far, and involve the town and colony in a quarrel with Great Britain, others answered, "It must come to a quarrel between Great Britain and the colony sooner or later; and if so, when can be a better time than the present? Hundreds of years may pass away before the parliament will make such a number of acts in violation of the British constitution as it has done of late years, and by which it has excited so formidable an opposition to the measures of ministry. Beside, the longer the contest is delayed, the more administration will be strengthened. Do not you observe, how the government at home are increasing their party here, by sending over young fellows to enjoy appointments, who marry into our first families, and so weaken the opposition? By such like means, and by multiplying posts and places, and giving them to their own friends, or employing them to the corruption of their antagonists, they will encrease their own force faster, in proportion, than the force of the country party will encrease by population. If then we must quarrel, ere we can have our rights secured, now is the most eligible period. Our credit also is at stake; we must venture, and unless we do, we shall be discarded by the sons of liberty in the other colonies, whose assistance we may expect upon emergencies, in case they find us steady, resolute, and faithful."

* Mr. Quincy.

"It

"It is not, Mr. Moderator, the spirit that vapours within these walls that must stand us in stead. The exertions of this day will call forth events, which will make a very different spirit necessary for our salvation. Whoever supposes that shouts and hosannas will terminate the trials of the day, entertains a childish fancy. We must be grossly ignorant of the importance and value of the prize for which we contend; we must be equally ignorant of the power of those who have combined against us; we must be blind to that malice, inveteracy, and insatiable revenge, which actuate our enemies, public and private, abroad and in our bosom, to hope that we shall end this controversy without the sharpest—sharpest conflicts—to flatter ourselves that popular resolves, popular harangues, popular acclamations, and popular vapour, will vanquish our foes. Let us consider the issue. Let us look to the end. Let us weigh and consider before we advance to those measures which must bring on the most trying and terrible struggle this country ever saw."

The question was again put, and passed without a negative.

Aware of the approaching danger, the captain of the vessel was desirous of returning, and applied to the governor for a clearance; he, affecting a rigid regard to the letter of his duty, declined giving one, unless the vessel should be properly

qualified at the custom house. This answer being reported to the meeting, it was declared to be dissolved; and an immense crowd repaired to the quay, where a number of the most resolute, disguised like Mohawk Indians, boarded the vessels, and in about two hours, broke open three hundred and forty-two chests of tea, and discharged their contents into the ocean.

These proceedings of the colonists were laid before parliament in a message from the crown, and a very high and general indignation was excited in that body by the outrages stated to have been committed. They expressed, almost unanimously, their approbation of the measures adopted by his Majesty, and gave the most explicit assurances that they would not fail to exert every means in their power, effectually to provide for the due execution of the laws, and to secure the dependence of the colonies upon the crown and parliament of Great Britain. The temper both of the house and of the nation was now entirely favourable to the high-handed system of coercion proposed by ministers, and that temper was not permitted to pass away, without being employed to advantage. A bill was soon brought in "for discontinuing the lading and shipping of goods, wares, and merchandizes at Boston, or the harbour thereof, and for the removal of the custom house and its dependencies to the town of Salem." This bill was to continue in force not only

only until compensation should be made to the East India Company for the damage sustained, but until the king in council should declare himself satisfied as to the restoration of peace and good order in the town. It passed both houses without a division, and almost without opposition.

Soon after this, a bill was brought in for better regulating the government of the province of Massachussetts Bay. By this act the charter was totally subverted, and the nomination of councellors, and of all magistrates and officers, vested in the crown. The persons thus appointed were to hold their offices during the royal pleasure. This bill also was carried through both houses by great majorities, but not without a vigorous opposition, and an animated debate.

The next measure proposed, was a bill for the impartial administration of justice in the province of Massachussetts Bay. It provided, "that in case any person should be indicted in that province, for murder or any other capital offence, and it should appear by information given on oath to the governor, that the fact was committed in the exercise or aid of magistracy in suppressing riots, and that a fair trial could not be had in the province, he should send the person so indicted to any other colony, or to Great Britain to be tried." This act was to continue in force four years; and was, as an English writer observes,

the counter part of the absolute and tyrannical act of Henry VIII. lately revived, for the trial in Great Britain of treasons committed in America.

A bill was also passed for quartering soldiers on the inhabitants; and the system was completed by an act for making more effectual provision for the government of the province of Quebec. This bill extended the limits of that province, so as to include the territory between the lakes, the Ohio, and the Mississippi; and, which was its most exceptionable feature, established a legislative council to be appointed by the crown.

Amidst these hostile measures, one single conciliatory proposition was made. Mr. Rose Fuller, member for Rye, moved that the house resolve itself into a committee, to take into consideration the duty on the importation of tea into America,* with a view to its repeal. This motion was seconded by Mr. Burke, and supported with all the powers of reasoning, and all the splendour of eloquence, which he so eminently possessed; but it was lost by a great majority. The Earl of Chatham, too, who had long been indisposed, again made his appearance in the house of lords. He could only have been drawn out by the strong sense he entertained of the fatal importance of those mea-

* Belsham.

sures

sures into which the nation was hurrying. But his efforts were unavailing. Neither his weight of character, his sound judgment (which was yet unimpaired) nor his manly eloquence, which, even at this late period of life, while his venerable frame was enfeebled by disease, partook largely of that fire and energy which, in the vigour of his mid-day course, gave him such commanding influence over the human mind, could arrest the hand of fate, which seemed, with irresistible force, to propel this lofty towering nation into a system which terminated in its dismemberment.

It was expected, and this expectation was encouraged by Mr. Hutchinson then in England, that by directing these measures of punishment particularly against Boston, not only the union of the colonies could be broken, but Massachussetts herself would be divided. Never was expectation more completely disappointed. It was perceived by all that Boston was to be punished for havin gresisted, only with more violence, the principle which they had resisted; and that the object of the punishment was, to coerce obedience to principles they were yet determined to oppose. Every man felt, therefore, that the cause of Boston was the cause of all; that their destinies were indissolubly connected with those of that devoted town; and that they must either submit to be taxed by a parliament in which they were not, and could not be, re-

presented, or support, with all the means they possessed, their brethren who were doomed to support the first shock of a power, which if successful there, would overwhelm them all. The neighbouring towns disdained to avail themselves of the calamities inflicted on a sister, in consequence of her exertions in the common cause. They clung to her with increased affection; and that spirit of enthusiastic patriotism, which, for a time, elevates the mind above all considerations of individual acquisition, became the ruling passion in the American bosom.

On receiving the first intelligence of the Boston Port Bill, a meeting of the people of that town was called. They were sensible that "the sharpest—sharpest conflict," was indeed now approaching, but seemed unawed by its horrors. Far from seeking to shelter themselves by submission, from the threatening storm, they grew more determined as it increased. Resolutions were passed, expressing their opinion of the impolicy, injustice, inhumanity, and cruelty, of the act, from which they appealed to God and the world; and also invited the other colonies to join with them in an agreement to stop all imports and exports to and from Great Britain, Ireland, and the West Indies, until the act should be repealed, as the only means remaining for the salvation of North America and her liberties.

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It was not in Boston only that this spirit was aroused. Addresses were soon received from every part of the continent, expressing sentiments of sympathy in their sufferings, exhorting them to resolution and perseverance, and assuring them that they were considered as suffering in the common cause.

The legislature of Virginia was in session when the first intelligence of the Boston Port Bill reached that province. The house of burgesses appointed the first of June, the day on which the bill was to commence its operation, to be set apart for fasting, prayer, and humiliation; to implore the divine interposition to avert the heavy calamity which threatened destruction to their civil rights, and the evils of a civil war; and to give one heart and one mind to the people, firmly to oppose every invasion of their liberties. Similar resolutions were adopted almost every where, and the first of June became throughout the several colonies, a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer; in the course of which sermons were universally preached to the people, well calculated to inspire them with the utmost horror against the authors of the unjust suffering of their fellow subjects in Boston.

In consequence of this measure, the assembly was dissolved; but, before their separation, an association was entered into, signed by eighty-nine members, in which they declared an attack on one

colony, to compel submission to arbitrary taxes, is an attack on all British America, and threatens ruin to the rights of all, unless the united wisdom of the whole be applied in prevention.

They therefore recommended to the committee of correspondence, to communicate with the several committees of the other provinces, on the expediency of appointing deputies from the different colonies, to meet annually in general congress, and to deliberate on those general measures which the united interests of America might from time to time render necessary. This measure had already been proposed in town-meetings in New York and Boston.

While the people of Boston were yet employed in the first consultations which took place on hearing of the bill directed particularly against their town, General Gage, the successor of Governor Hutchinson, arrived among them. Notwithstanding the deep and solemn gloom of the moment, he was received with those external marks of decent respect which had been usual, and which were supposed to belong to his station.

In a few days the general court assembled, and had notice from the governor that, in pursuance of the late act of parliament, their place of session would be changed, and that they would be called together on the first of June, at Salem. To

evade this measure, they were hurrying to complete the business before them prior to that day, which being made known to the governor, he hastily adjourned them to the seventh of June, to meet at the place designated by his instructions.

Soon after assembling, the house of representatives, mindful of the importance of combining the wisdom of America in one great and common council, passed resolutions, declaring the expediency of a meeting of committees from the several colonies for the purposes therein specified, and appointing five gentlemen as a committee on the part of Massachussetts.

The colonies, from New Hampshire to South Carolina, inclusive, adopted this measure: and, where the legislatures were not in session, the people either elected delegates, who chose a committee; or, in the first instance, elected a committee to represent them in the general congress.

The legislature of Massachussetts also passed declaratory resolutions, expressive of their sense of the state of public affairs, and the designs of government; in which they recommended to the inhabitants of that province totally to renounce the consumption of East India teas, and, as far as in them lay, to discontinue the use of all goods imported from the East-Indies and Great Britain, until the public grievances of America should be radically and totally redressed.

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The more fully to effect this essential purpose, it was again strongly recommended to give every possible encouragement to American manufactures.

The governor having obtained intelligence of the manner in which the house was employed, sent his secretary the day on which the committee reported their resolutions, with directions immediately to dissolve the assembly. He found the door shut, and being refused admittance, read the order of dissolution aloud on the stair case.

The day after the dissolution of the assembly, the governor received an address from the principle inhabitants of Salem, now become the metropolis of the province, which does them infinite honour, and marks the deep impression which a sense of common danger had made. They no longer considered themselves merely as the inhabitants of Salem, but as Americans; and they spurned advantages to be derived to themselves, from the distress inflicted on a sister town for its patriotic zeal, in a cause common to all.

"We are deeply afflicted," say they, "with the sense of our public calamities; but the miseries that are now rapidly hastening on our brethren in the capital of the province, greatly excite our commiseration; and we hope your excellency will use your endeavours to prevent a further accumulation of evils on that already sorely distressed people."—"By shutting up the port of Boston, some imagine that the

the course of trade might be turned hither, and to our benefit; but nature, in the formation of our harbour, forbids our becoming rivals in commerce with that convenient mart. And, where it otherwise, we must be dead to every idea of justice, lost to all feelings of humanity, could we indulge one thought to seize on wealth, and raise our fortunes on the ruin of our suffering neighbours."

About this time rough draughts of the two remaining bills relative to the province of Massachussetts Bay, as well as that for quartering troops in America, were received in Boston, and circulated through the Continent. They served to confirm the wavering, and to render the moderate indignant, while the violent became still more so.

An agreement was framed by the committee of correspondence at Boston, entitled "a solemn league and covenant," wherein the subscribers bound themselves in the most solemn manner, and in the presence of God, to suspend all commercial intercourse with Great Britain from the last day of the ensuing month of August, until the Boston Port Bill, and the other late obnoxious laws should be repealed. They also bound themselves in the same manner, not to consume, or purchase from any other, any goods whatever which arrived after the specified time, and to break off all commerce, trade, and dealings with any who did, as well as with the importers of the goods. They renounced,

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in the same manner, all intercourse and connection with those who should refuse to subscribe to that covenant, or to bind themselves by some similar agreement; and they annexed to the renunciation of intercourse, the dangerous penalty of publishing to the world the name of those, who should refuse this evidence of their attachment to the rights and interests of their country.

General Gage published against this covenant a strong proclamation, in which it was termed "an unlawful, hostile, and traiterous combination, contrary to the allegiance due to the king, destructive of the legal authority of parliament, and of the peace, good order, and safety of the community." All persons were warned against incurring the pains and penalties due to such dangerous offences; and all magistrates charged to apprehend, and secure for trial, such as should be in any manner guilty of them. But the time when the proclamations of governors were to be attended to had passed away; and the penalties, in the power of the committees of correspondence were much more dreaded than those which could be inflicted by the civil magistrate.

In whatever province legislatures were convened, or delegates assembled in convention, resolutions were entered into, manifesting indeed different degrees of resentment, but all concurring in the same great leading principles. It was every where declared that the cause of Boston was thecause of all British

British America; that the late acts respecting that devoted town were unjust, tyrannical, and unconstitutional; that the opposition to this ministerial system of oppression ought to be universally and perseveringly maintained; that all intercourse with the parent state ought to be suspended, and domestic manufactures encouraged; and that a general congress should be formed for the purpose of uniting and guiding the councils, and directing the efforts, of North America. The committees of correspondence selected Philadelphia for the place, and the beginning of September for the time, of the meeting of this important council.

On the 4th of September, the delegates from eleven* provinces appeared at the place appointed; and the next day they assembled at Carpenter's Hall, when Peyton Randolph, late speaker of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, was unanimously chosen president. The respective credentials† of the members

* Those of North Carolina did not arrive till the fourteenth.

† The members of this congress were generally elected by the authority of the colonial legislatures; but, in some instances, a different system had been pursued: in New Jersey and Maryland, the elections were made by committees chosen in the several counties for that particular purpose; and in New York, where the royal party was very strong, and where it is probable that no legislative act authorizing an election of members to represent that colony in congress

bers were then read and approved; and this august and patriotic body, having determined that each colony should have only one vote, whatever might be the number of its deputies; that their deliberations should be with closed doors; and that their proceedings, except such as they might determine to publish, should be kept inviolably secret; entered on the solemn and important duties assigned to them*.

Committees

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congress could have been obtained, the people themselves assembled in those places where the spirit of opposition to the claims of parliament prevailed, and elected deputies who were very readily received into congress.

The powers too with which the representatives of the several colonies were invested, were not only variously expressed, but were of various extent. Most generally, they were authorized to consult and advise on the means most proper to secure the liberties of the colonies, and to restore the harmony formerly subsisting between them and their mother country. In some instances, the powers given appeared to contemplate only such measures as would operate on the commercial connection between the two countries; in others, the discretion of the deputies was unlimited.

* The following is a list of the members composing the first congress.

John Sullivan Nathaniel Fulsom	} from New Hampshire.
James Bowdine Thomas Cushing Samuel Adams John Adams Robert Treat Paine	} from Massachusetts Bay.

Stephen

Committees were appointed to state the rights claimed by the colonies, which had been infringed by

Stephen Hopkins Samuel Ward	from Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.
Eliphalet Dyer Roger Sherman Silas Deane	from Connecticut.
James Duane Henry Wisner John Jay Philip Livingston Isaac Low John Alsop	from the city and county of New York, and other counties in the province of New York.
William Floyd	from the county of Suffolk in the province of New York.
James Kinsey William Livingston John Dehart Stephen Crane Richard Smith	from New Jersey.
Joseph Galloway Charles Humphreys Samuel Rhoads George Ross John Morton Thomas Mifflin Edward Biddle John Dickinson	from Pennsylvania.

by acts of the British parliament passed since the year 1763; to prepare a petition to the king, and addresses to the people of Great Britain, to the inhabitants of the province of Quebec, and to the twelve colonies represented in congress.

Cæsar Rodney Thomas M'Kean George Read	from Newcastle, Kent, and Sussex on Delaware.
Robert Goldsborough Thomas Johnson William Paca Samuel Chase Mathew Tilghman	from Maryland.
Peyton Randolph Richard Henry Lee George Washington Patrick Henry Richard Poland Benjamin Harrison Edmund Pendleton	from Virginia.
William Hooper Joseph Hughes Richard Caswell	from North Carolina.
Henry Middleton John Rutledge Thomas Lynch Christopher Gadsden Edward Rutledge	from South Carolina.

Resolutions

Resolutions* of the county of Suffolk in Massachussetts, of a very animated and comprehensive nature,

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* These resolutions manifested a degee of irritation which had not before been displayed. They are introduced in the following manner:—" Whereas the power but not the justice, the vengeance but not the wisdom of Great Britain, which of old persecuted, scourged, and exiled our fugitive parents from their native shores, now pursues us, their guiltless children, with unrelenting severity: and whereas this, then savage and uncultivated desert, was purchased by the toil and treasure, or acquired by the blood and valour of those our venerable progenitors; to us they bequeathed the dear bought inheritance; to our care and protection they consigned it; and the most sacred obligations are upon us to transmit the glorious purchase, unfettered by power, unclogged with shackles, to our innocent and beloved offspring. On the fortitude, on the wisdom, and on the exertions of this important day, is suspended the fate of this new world, and of unborn millions. If a boundless extent of continent, and swarming with millions, will tamely submit to live, move, and have their being, at the arbitrary will of a licentious minister, they basely yield to voluntary slavery, and future generations shall load their memories with incessant execrations. On the other hand, if we arrest the hand which would ransack our pockets, if we disarm the parricide which points the dagger to our bosoms, if we nobly defeat that fatal edict which proclaims a power to frame laws for us in all cases whatsoever, thereby entailing the endless and numberless curses of slavery upon us, our heirs, and their heirs for ever; if we successfully resist that unparalleled usurpation of unconstitutional power whereby our capital is robbed of the means of *life*; whereby the streets of Boston are thronged with military executioners; whereby our coasts are lined, and harbours crowded with ships of war; whereby the charter

nature, and commending, among other important subjects a provincial congress, and that the collectors of taxes, and all officers who have public monies in their hands, retain the same until the civil government of the province be placed upon a constitutional foundation, or until it shall otherwise be ordered by the provincial congress; having been taken into consideration—it was unanimously agreed, "That this assembly deeply feels the sufferings of their countrymen in Massachussetts Bay under the operation of the late unjust, cruel, and oppressive acts of the British parliament, that they most thoroughly approve the wisdom and fortitude with which the opposition to these wicked ministerial measures has hitherto been conducted, and they earnestly recommend to their brethren, a perseverance in the same firm and temperate conduct as expressed in the reso-

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charter of the colony, that sacred barrier against the encroachments of tyranny is mutilated, and in effect annihilated; whereby a murderous law is framed to shelter villains from the hands of justice; whereby the unalienable and inestimable inheritance, which we derived from nature, the constitution of Britain, and the privileges warranted to us in the charter of the province, is totally wrecked, annulled, and vacated: posterity will acknowledge that virtue which preserved them free and happy; and while we enjoy the rewards and blessings of the faithful, the torrent of panegyrists will extol our reputations to that latest period, when the streams of time shall be absorbed in the abyss of eternity. Therefore resolved," &c. &c. &c.

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lutions determined upon at a meeting of the delegates for the county of Suffolk, trusting that the effect of the united efforts of North America in their behalf will carry such conviction to the British nation of the unwise, unjust, and ruinous policy of the present administration, as quickly to introduce better men and wiser measures."

It was also resolved unanimously, "that contributions from all the colonies for supplying the necessities, and alleviating the distresses, of our brethren at Boston, ought to be continued in such manner, and so long, as their occasions may require."

The merchants of the several colonies were requested not to send to Great Britain any orders for goods, and to direct the execution of all orders already sent to be suspended until the sense of congress, on the means to be taken for the preservation of the liberties of America, be made public. In a few days, resolutions were entered into, suspending the importation of goods from Great Britain or Ireland, or any of their dependencies, and of their manufactures from any place whatever, after the first day of the succeeding December; and against the purchase or use of such goods. It was also determined that all exports to Great Britain, Ireland, and the West Indies, should cease on the 10th of September, 1775, unless American grievances should be redressed before that time. An association corresponding with these resolutions was then framed,

and signed by every member present. Never were laws more faithfully observed than the resolves of congress at this period, and their association was of consequence universally adopted.

Very early in the session, a declaration* of rights, in

* "Whereas, since the close of the last war, the British parliament, claiming a power of right to bind the people of America by statutes in all cases whatsoever, hath in some acts expressly imposed taxes upon them; and, in others, under various pretences, but in fact for the purpose of raising a revenue, hath imposed rates and duties payable in these colonies, established a board of commissioners with unconstitutional powers, and extended the jurisdiction of courts of admiralty, not only for collecting the said duties, but for the trial of causes merely arising within the body of a county.

And whereas, in consequence of other statutes, judges, who before held only estates at will in their offices, have been made dependent on the crown alone for their salaries, and standing armies kept in time of peace: and whereas, it has lately been resolved in parliament, that by force of a statute made in the thirty-fifth year of the reign of King Henry VIII. colonists may be transported to England, and tried there upon accusations for treasons and misprisons, or concealments of treasons committed in the colonies, and by a late statute, such trials have been directed in cases therein mentioned.

And whereas in the last session of parliament, three statutes were made; one, entitled, 'An act to discontinue in such manner, and for such time, as are therein mentioned, the landing and discharging, lading or shipping of goods, wares, and merchandize, at the town and within the harbour of Boston in the province of Massachussetts Bay, in North America;' another, entitled, 'An act for the better regulating

in the shape of resolves, was agreed to, which merits peculiar attention because it states precisely the ground

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ing the government of the province of Massachussetts Bay in New England;' and another, entitled, 'An act for the impartial administration of justice, in the case of persons questioned for any act done by them in the execution of the law, or for the suppression of riots and tumults, in the province of Massachussetts' Bay in New England;' and another statute was then made, 'for making more effectual provision for the government of the province of Quebec,' &c.—All which statutes are impolitic, unjust, and cruel, as well as unconstitutional, and most dangerous, and destructive of American rights.

And whereas assemblies have been frequently dissolved, contrary to the rights of the people, when they attempted to deliberate on grievances; and their dutiful, humble, loyal, and reasonable petitions to the crown for redress, have been repeatedly treated with contempt by his Majesty's ministers of state: the good people of the several colonies of New Hampshire, Massachussetts Bay, Rhode Island, and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New Castle, Kent, and Sussex on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, justly alarmed at the arbitrary proceedings of parliament and administration, have severally elected, constituted, and appointed deputies to meet and sit in general congress, in the city of Philadelphia, in order to obtain such establishment, as that their religion, laws, and liberties may not be subverted: whereupon the deputies so appointed being now assembled, in a full and free representation of these colonies, taking into their most serious consideration the best means of obtaining the ends aforesaid, do, in the first place, as Englishmen their ancestors in like cases have usually done, for asserting and vindicating their rights

ground now taken by America, and evidences the terms on which a satisfactory reconciliation was practicable.

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and liberties, DECLARE, that the inhabitants of the English colonies in North America, by the immutable laws of nature, the principles of the English constitution, and the several charters or compacts, have the following rights:

Resolved, N. C. D. 1st, That they are entitled to life, liberty, and property: and they have never ceded to any sovereign power whatever, a right to dispose of either without their consent.

Resolved, N. C. D. 2d, That our ancestors, who first settled in these colonies, were, at the time of their emigration from the mother country, entitled to all the rights, liberties, and immunities of free and natural born subjects within the realm of England.

Resolved, N. C. D. 3d, That by such emigration they by no means forfeited, surrendered, or lost any of those rights, but that they were, and their descendants now are, entitled to the exercise and enjoyment of all such of them, as their local and other circumstances enabled them to exercise and enjoy.

Resolved, 4th, That the foundation of English liberty, and of all free government, is a right in the people to participate in their legislative council: and as the English colonists are not represented, and from their local and other circumstances cannot properly be represented in the British Parliament, they are entitled to a free and exclusive power of legislation in their several provincial legislatures, where their right of representation can alone be preserved, in all cases of taxation, and internal policy, subject only to the negative of their sovereign, in such manner as has been heretofore used and accustomed: but from the necessity of the case, and a regard to the mutual interests of both countries, we cheerfully consent to the operation of such acts of the British Parliament, as are *bonâ fide,* restrained to the regulation of our external commerce,

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practicable. It is observeable that rights were, at this period, asserted, which, in the commencement of

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for the purpose of securing the commercial advantages of the whole empire to the mother country, and the commercial benefit of its respective members: excluding every idea of taxation internal or external, for raising a revenue on the subjects in America, without their consent.

Resolved, N. C. D. 5th, That the respective colonies are entitled to the common law of England, and more especially, to the great and inestimable one of being tried by their peers of the vicinage according to the course of that law.

Resolved, 6th, That they are entitled to the benefit of such of the English statues as existed at the time of their colonization; and which they have, by experience, respectively found to be applicable to their several local and other circumstances.

Resolved, N. C. D. 7th, That these his Majesty's colonies are likewise entitled to all the immunities, and privileges granted and confirmed to them by royal charters, or secured by their several codes of provincial laws.

Resolved, N. C. D. 8th, That they have a right peaceably to assemble, consider of their grievances, and petition the king; and that all prosecutions, prohibitory proclamations, and commitments for the same, are illegal.

Resolved, N. C. D. 9th, That the keeping a standing army in these colonies, in time of peace, without the consent of the legislature of that colony, in which such army is kept, is against law.

Resolved, N. C. D. 10th, It is indispensably necessary to good government, and rendered essential by the English constitution, that the constituent branches of the legislature be independent of

of the contest, were not generally maintained; and that, even now, the exclusive right of legislation in the

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each other; that, therefore, the exercise of legislative power in several colonies, by a council appointed, during pleasure, by the crown, is unconstitutional, dangerous, and destructive to the freedom of American legislation.

All and each of which the aforesaid deputies in behalf of themselves, and their constituents, do claim, demand, and insist on, as their indubitable rights and liberties; which cannot be legally taken from them, altered, or abridged, by any power whatever, without their own consent, by their representatives in their several provincial legislatures.

In the course of our enquiry, we find many infringements and violations of the foregoing rights, which, from an ardent desire that harmony and mutual intercourse of affection and interest may be restored, we pass over for the present, and proceed to state such acts and measures as have been adopted since the last war, which demonstrate a system formed to enslave America.

Resolved, N. C. D. That the following acts of parliament are infringements and violations of the rights of the colonists; and that the repeal of them is essentially necessary, in order to restore harmony between Great Britain and the American colonies; viz.

The several acts of 4 Geo. III. ch. 15 and ch. 34; 5 Geo. III. ch. 25; 6 Geo. III. ch. 52; 7 Geo. III. ch. 41 and ch. 46; 8 Geo. III. ch. 22; which impose duties for the purpose of raising a revenue in America, extend the power of the admiralty courts beyond their ancient limits, deprive the American subject of trial by jury, authorize the judge's certificate to indemnify the prosecutor from damages that he might otherwise be liable to, requiring oppressive security from an impose claimant of ships and goods seized before he shall be allowed to defend his property, and are subversive of American rights.

Also

the colonial legislatures, with the exception of acts of the British parliament, *bonâ fide*, made to regulate and

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Also, 12 Geo. III. ch. 24, entitled, 'An act for the better securing his Majesty's dock-yards, magazines, ships, ammunition, and stores,' which declares a new offence in America, and deprives the American subject of a constitutional trial by jury of the vicinage, by authorizing the trial of any person charged with the committing of any offence described in the said act, out of the realm, to be indicted and tried for the same in any shire or county of the realm.

Also, the three acts passed in the last session of parliament, for stopping the port and blocking up the harbour of Boston, for altering the charter and government of Massachussetts Bay; and that which is entitled, 'An act for the better administration of justice,' &c.

Also, the act passed in the same session for establishing the Roman Catholic religion in the province of Quebec, abolishing the equitable system of English laws, and erecting a tyranny there, to the great danger (from so total a dissimilarity of religion, law, and government of the neighbouring British colonies, by the assistance of whose blood and treasure the said country was conquered from France.

Also, the act passed in the same session, for the better providing suitable quarters for officers and soldiers in his Majesty's service in North America.

Also, that the keeping of a standing army in several of the colonies in time of peace, without the consent of the legislature of that colony in which such army is kept, is against law.

To these grievous acts and measures Americans cannot submit; but in hopes their fellow-subjects in Great Britain will, on a revision

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and restrain external commerce, which from necessity were consented to, was not unanimously averred.

The addresses prepared, the various papers drawn up, and the measures recommended by this Congress, form their best eulogium, and attest how judiciously a selection of character had been made by the people, for the all interesting concerns entrusted to their care. Affection to the mother country, an exalted admiration of her national character, unwillingness to separate from her, a knowledge of the hazards and difficulties of the struggle to be engaged in, mingled with an enthusiastic love of liberty and of country; with a conviction that all which can make life valuable was at stake; characterize their proceedings.

"When," say they, in their address to the people of Great Britain, "a nation led to greatness by the hand of liberty, and possessed of all the glory that heroism, munificence, and humanity can bestow, descends to the ungrateful task of forging chains for her friends and children; and, instead of

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of them, restore us to that state, in which both countries found happiness and prosperity, we have for the present only resolved to pursue the following peaceable measures: 1st, To enter into a non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation, agreement, or association: 2dly, To prepare an address to the people of Great Britain, and a memorial to the inhabitants of British America: And, 3dly, To prepare a loyal address to his Majesty, agreeably to resolutions already entered into."

giving support to freedom, turns advocate for slavery and oppression, there is reason to suspect, she has either ceased to be virtuous, or been extremely negligent in the appointment of her rulers.

"In almost every age, in repeated conflicts, in long and bloody wars, as well civil as foreign, against many and powerful nations, against the open assaults of enemies, and the more dangerous treachery of friends; have the inhabitants of your island, your great and glorious ancestors, maintained their independence, and transmitted the rights of men, and the blessings of liberty to you, their posterity.

"Be not surprised, therefore, that we, who are descended from the same common ancestors, that we, whose forefathers participated in all the rights, the liberties, and the constitution you so justly boast of, and who have carefully conveyed the same fair inheritance to us, guaranteed by the plighted faith of government, and the most solemn compact with British sovereigns, should refuse to surrender them to men, who found their claims on no principles of reason, and who prosecute them with a design, that, by having *our* lives and property in their power, they may with the greater facility enslave *you*."

After stating the serious condition of American affairs, and that not only the oppressions, but the misrepresentations of their country, had induced this address; after stating that they claim to be as free

free as their fellow-subjects in Britain, they say, "are not the proprietors of the soil of Great Britain lords of their own property? Can it be taken from them without their consent? Will they yield it to the arbitrary disposal of any men or number of men whatever? You know they will not,

"Why then are the proprietors of the soil of America less lords of their property than you are of yours; or why should they submit it to the disposal of your parliament, or any other parliament or council in the world, not of their election? Can the intervention of the sea that divides us cause disparity in rights; or, can any reason be given why English subjects, who live three thousand miles from the royal palace, should enjoy less liberty than those who are three hundred miles distant from it?

"Reason looks with indignation on such distinctions, and freemen can never perceive their propriety."

"At the conclusion of the late war—a war rendered glorious by the abilities and integrity of a minister, to whose efforts the British empire owes its safety and its fame, at the conclusion of this war, which was succeeded by an inglorious peace, formed under the auspices of a minister, of principles, and of a family, unfriendly to the protestant cause, and inimical to liberty;—we say at this period, and under the influence of that man, a plan

a plan for enslaving your fellow-subjects in America was concerted, and has ever since been pertinaciously carrying into execution."

The former relative situation of the two countries is then stated, and they are reminded of the loyalty and attachment of the colonists to the common interests of the empire. The transactions since the conclusion of the war are passed in solemn review, and they add, "This being a true state of facts, let us beseech you to consider to what end they lead.

"Admit that the ministry, by the powers of Britain, and the aid of our Roman Catholic neighbours, should be able to carry the point of taxation, and reduce us to a state of perfect humiliation and slavery; such an enterprize would, doubtless, make some addition to your national debt, which already presses down your liberties, and fills you with pensioners and placemen. We presume also, that your commerce will somewhat be diminished. However, suppose you should prove victorious, in what condition will you then be? What advantages or what laurels will you reap from such a conquest? May not a ministry with the same armies enslave you?

The resources which the subjugation of America would place in the hands of the crown are then expatiated on, and the address proceeds—"We believe there is yet much virtue, much justice, much

much public spirit in the English nation. To that justice we now appeal. You have been told that we are seditious, impatient of government, and desirous of independency. Be assured that these are not facts, but calumnies. Permit us to be as free as yourselves, and we shall ever esteem a union with you to be our greatest glory, and our greatest happiness. We shall ever be ready to contribute all in our power to the welfare of the empire. We shall consider your enemies as our enemies, and your interest as our own.

"But, if you are determined that your ministers shall wantonly sport with the rights of mankind—if neither the voice of justice, the dictates of the law, the principles of the constitution, nor the suggestions of humanity, can restrain your hands from shedding human blood in such an impious cause; we must then tell you, that we will never submit to be hewers of wood, nor drawers of water, for any ministry or nation in the world.

"Place us in the same situation that we were at the close of the last war, and our former harmony will be restored*."

* The committee which prepared this manly and eloquent address were, Mr. Lee, Mr. Livingston, and Mr. Jay. The composition has been generally attributed to Mr. Jay.

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The petition to the king states succinctly the grievances complained of, and then proceeds: "Had our Creator been pleased to give us existence in a land of slavery, the sense of our condition might have been mitigated by ignorance and habit. But thanks be to his adorable goodness, we were born the heirs of freedom, and ever enjoyed our right under the auspices of your royal ancestors, whose family was seated on the British throne, to rescue and secure a pious and gallant nation from the popery and depotism of a superstitious and inexorable tyrant. Your Majesty, we are confident, justly rejoices, that your title to the crown is thus founded on the title of your people to liberty; and, therefore, we doubt not but your royal wisdom must approve the sensibility that teaches your subjects anxiously to guard the blessing they receive from Divine Providence, and thereby to prove the performance of that compact, which elevated the illustrious House of Brunswick to the imperial dignity it now possesses.

"The apprehension of being degraded into a state of servitude from the pre-eminent rank of English freemen, while our minds retain the strongest love of liberty, and clearly foresee the miseries preparing for us, and for our posterity, excites emotions in our breasts, which, though we cannot describe, we should not wish to conceal. Feeling as men, and thinking as subjects, in the manner we do, silence would be disloyalty. By giving this faithful information, we do all in our power to promote the

great objects of your royal cares, the tranquillity of your government, and the welfare of your people.

" Duty to your Majesty, and regard for the preservation of ourselves and our posterity, the primary obligations of nature and society, command us to intreat your royal attention ; and, as your Majesty enjoys the signal distinction of reigning over freemen, we apprehend the language of freemen cannot be displeasing. Your royal indignation, we hope, will rather fall on those designing and dangerous men, who daringly interposing themselves between your royal person and your faithful subjects, and for several years past incessantly employed to dissolve the bonds of society, by abusing your Majesty's authority, misrepresenting your American subjects, and prosecuting the most desperate and irritating projects of oppression, have at length compelled us, by the force of accumulated injuries, too severe to be any longer tolerable, to disturb your Majesty's repose by our complaints.

" These sentiments are extorted from hearts that much more willingly would bleed in your Majesty's service. Yet so greatly have we been misrepresented, that a necessity has been alleged of taking our property from us without our consent, ' to defray the charge of the administration of justice, the support of civil government, and the defence, protection, and security of the colonies."

After assuring his Majesty of the untruth of these allegations, they say—" Yielding to no British subjects

jects in affectionate attachment to your Majesty's person, family, and government, we too dearly prize the privilege of expressing that attachment, by those proofs that are honourable to the prince that receives them, and to the people who give them, ever to resign it to any body of men upon earth.

" We ask but for peace, liberty, and safety. We wish not a diminution of the prerogative, nor do we solicit the grant of any new right in our favour; your royal authority over us, and our connection with Great Britain, we shall always carefully and zealously endeavour to support and maintain."

After re-stating in a very affecting manner the most essential grievances of which they complain, and professing that their future conduct, if their apprehensions should be removed, would prove them not unworthy the regard they had been accustomed, in their happier days, to enjoy; for, appealing to that Being who searches thoroughly the hearts of his creatures, they solemnly profess, that their councils have been influenced by no other motives than a dread of impending destruction: they add,

" Permit us, then, most gracious sovereign, in the name of all your faithful people in America, with the utmost humility to implore you, for the honour of Almighty God, whose pure religion our enemies are undermining; for your glory, which can be advanced only by rendering your subjects happy, and keeping them united; for the interests of your family, depending on the principles which enthron-

ed it.; for the safety and welfare of your kingdom and dominions, threatened with almost unavoidable dangers and distresses; that your Majesty, as the loving father of your whole people, connected by the same bonds of law, loyalty, faith, and blood, though dwelling in various countries, will not suffer the transcendant relations, formed by these ties, to be further violated, in uncertain expectation of effects that if attained, never can compensate for the calamities through which they must be gained*."

The address to their constituents is replete with serious and temperate argument. In this paper, the several causes which had led to the existing state of things were detailed more at large, and much labour was used thoroughly to convince their judgments, that their liberties must be destroyed, and the security of their property and persons annihilated, by submission to the pretensions of Great Britain. Their greatest object being to unite the people of America, by demonstrating to them the sincerity with which their leaders had sought for reconciliation, on terms compatible with liberty; the conduct of the colonists was contended to have been uniform-

* The committee, which brought in this admirably well drawn, and truly conciliatory, address, were, Mr. Lee, Mr. John Adams, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Henry, and Mr. Rutledge. The original composition has been generally attributed to Mr. Lee.

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ly moderate, and entirely exempt from blame, while the system of administration was treated as equally dangerous to them all, although it insidiously professed to be particularly aimed at Massachussetts. They stated their measures, and after having declared their confidence, that the mode of commercial resistance, which had been recommended, would prove efficacious if persisted in with fidelity and virtue, they concluded with saying—"Your own salvation, and that of your posterity, now depends upon yourselves. You have already shewn that you entertain a proper sense of the blessings you are striving to retain against the temporary inconvenience you may suffer from a stoppage of trade; you will weigh, in the opposite balance, the endless miseries you and your descendants must endure from an established arbitrary power; you will not forget the honour of your country, that must, from your behaviour, take its title, in the estimation of the world, to glory or to shame; and you will, with the deepest attention, reflect, that if the peaceable mode of opposition, recommended by us, be broken and rendered ineffectual, as your cruel and haughty ministerial enemies, from a contemptuous opinion of your firmness, insolently predict will be the case, you must inevitably be reduced to choose either a more dangerous contest, or a final, infamous, and ruinous submission.

"Motives thus cogent, arising from the emergency of your unhappy condition, must excite your

utmost diligence and zeal to give all possible strength and energy to the pacific measures calculated for your relief. But we think ourselves bound in duty to observe to you, that the schemes agitated against these colonies have been so conducted, as to render it prudent that you should extend your views to mournful events, and be in all respects prepared for every contingency. Above all things, we earnestly entreat you, with devotion of spirit, penitence of heart, and amendment of life, to humble yourselves, and implore the favour of Almighty God; and we fervently beseech his divine goodness to take you into his gracious protection*."

The letter to the people of Canada requiring no inconsiderable degree of address: the vast extent of that province was by no means so alarming to them as their neighbours; and it was not easy to persuade the French inhabitants, who were by far the most numerous, that the establishment of their religion and the partial restoration of their ancient jurisprudence, were acts of oppression which ought to be resisted. This delicate subject was managed with considerable dexterity, and the prejudices of the Canadians were assailed with some success.

Letters were also addressed to the colonies of St. John's, Nova Scotia, Georgia, and the Floridas, in-

* Mr. Lee, Mr. Livingston, and Mr. Jay, were also the committee that brought in this address.

viting them to unite with their brethren in what was deemed the common cause of all British America*.

Having completed the business before them, and recommended that another congress should be held in Philadelphia, on the 10th day of the succeeding May, the house dissolved itself.

The proceedings of congress were read throughout America with enthusiastic admiration. Their recommendations were revered as revelations, and obeyed as laws of the highest obligation. It is true, that in some few places disaffection to the system of opposition prevailed. Absolute unanimity did not and could not be expected to exist. But seldom have a whole people been more united on any occasion; and a more sincere and perfect conviction, that every principle of right was arranged within them to animate the human bosom, than was now felt by the great body of Americans. The people, generally, made great efforts to arm and discipline themselves. Independent companies were every where formed of characters of the greatest influence, and the whole face of the country exhibited the aspect of an approaching war. It however is apparent, from the measures adopted, that although resistance by force was contemplated as a possible

* These letters, as well as that to the inhabitants of the province of Quebec, were prepared by Mr. Cushing, Mr. Lee, and Mr. Dickinson.

event, yet the hope, that the non-importation of British goods would so entensively interest the merchants and manufacturers of that nation in their favour, as to obtain thereby a repeal of the obnoxious acts, was fondly cherished and adhered to. It is impossible, otherwise, to account for the non-importation agreement itself. Had war been considered as inevitable, every principle of sound policy would have demanded that imports should have been encouraged, and the large stock of supplies for an army obtained.

Notwithstanding the liberal contributions made through the colonies for the people of Boston, the total stoppage of the trade of that town produced infinite distress. It was, however, borne with exemplary fortitude—a fortitude supported by the consoling reflection, that they were the objects of generous sympathy and admiration. The merchants, and other inhabitants of the neighbouring town of Marblehead, one of the places to be benefited by diverting from the capital the trade of the province, generously offered to the importers of Boston the free use of their stores and wharfs, and to attend the lading and unlading their vessels without expence. They at the same time exhorted them to persevere with that patience and resolution which had ever characterized them.

Soon after the entrance of General Gage into his government, two regiments of foot, with a small detachment of artillery and some cannon, were landed

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at Boston, and encamped on the common that lies within the peninsula on which the town stands. They were gradually reinforced by several regiments from Ireland, and from different parts of the continent. The dissatisfaction occasioned by the appearance of these troops was increased by placing a guard on Boston neck, the narrow isthmus which connects the peninsula with the continent.

This circumstance gave rise to a report, which manifested to the inhabitants of the metropolis the temper of their neighbouring brethren It was said, that a regiment, stationed on the neck, had totally cut off the communication of the town with the country, in order to starve it into submission. On hearing this report, the inhabitants of the adjacent county of Worcester assembled in arms, and dispatched two messengers to enquire into the fact, with assurances of immediate assistance, should it be true.

With the laws relative to the province, Governor Gage received a list of thirty-two new counsellors, of whom twenty-four, a sufficient number to carry on the business of the government, accepted the office, and entered on its duties.

All those, who accepted offices under the new system, were denounced as enemies to their country. The new judges were every where prevented from proceeding in the administration of justice. When the court-houses where opened, the people crowded into them in such numbers, that the

judges could not obtain admittance; and on being ordered by the officers to make way for the court, they answered, that they knew no court independent of the ancient laws and usuages of their country, and to none other would they submit. The houses of such of the new counsellors as were in the country were surrounded by great bodies of people, whose threatening countenances and expressions announced to them, that they must resign their offices, or be subjected to the fury of an enraged populace. The former part of the alternative was generally embraced.

In the present irritable state of the public mind, and critical situation of public affairs, it was almost unavoidable, that every day should furnish new matter of discontent and jealousy. General Gage deemed it necessary, for the security of the troops, to fortify Boston neck; and, in consequence of this circumstance, it was seriously contemplated entirely to evacuate the town, and remove the people into the country. Congress was consulted on this proposition, and having taken it into consideration, were deterred by the difficulties attending the measure, from recommending it. They however referred it to the provincial Congress, and declared the opinion, that, if it should be deemed necessary, the expence of the removal ought to be borne by all the colonies.

This circumstance was soon succeeded by another which

which excited still greater alarm. The time for the general muster of the militia approached; and the governor, either feeling, or affecting to feel, apprehensions from their violence, seized upon the ammunition and stores, which were lodged in the provincial arsenal at Cambridge, and had them transported to Boston. He also seized on the powder in the magazines at Charlestown and some other places, which was partly private, and partly provincial property.

The ferment excited by this measure may readily be conceived. The people assembled in great numbers, and were with difficulty dissuaded by some characters of consideration and influence from marching immediately to Boston, and demanding a re delivery of the stores. Not long afterwards, the fort at Portsmouth in New Hampshire was attacked by an armed body of provincials, and carried by storm; and the powder it contained transported in boats to a place of safety. A similar measure was adopted in Rhode Island. These acts of violence are probably attributable, in some degree, to the example set by General Gage, and partly, to the royal proclamation prohibiting the exportation of arms and ammunition to the colonies.

About the same time, a report reached Connecticut, that the ships and troops had attacked the town of Boston, and were actually firing on it.

it. Several thousand men immediately assembled in arms, and marched with great expedition a considerable distance, before they were undeceived respecting the truth of the report.

It was in the midst of these ferments, and while these indications were multiplying on every side, that the commencement of hostilities was daily looked for, that the people of Suffolk, the county in which Boston stands, assembled in convention, and passed the resolves already mentioned, which in boldness exceed any that had been heretofore adopted.

Governor Gage had, before the general ferment had arisen to its present alarming height, issued writs for the election of members to a general assembly, to meet in the beginning of October. He had afterwards, by proclamation, countermanded these writs; but the proclamation was unattended to. The elections were held without regarding the authority of the governor, and the delegates, thus elected, assembled and voted themselves a provincial Congress. The affairs of the colony were conducted by them, as if they had been regularly and legitimately invested with all the powers of government; and their recommendations were regarded as the most sacred laws.

They drew up a plan for the defence of the province; provided magazines, ammunition, and stores, for twelve thousand militia; and enrolled a number of minute men, so called from their engaging to appear in arms at a minute's warning.

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On the approach of winter, the general had ordered temporary barracks to be erected for the troops, partly for their security, and partly to prevent the disorders which, in the present temper of parties, would unavoidably have resulted from quartering them in the town. Such however was the detestation in which they were held, and the dislike to see them provided for in any manner, that the select men and committees obliged the workmen to quit the employment, although they were paid for their labour by the crown, and although employment was at that time with difficulty obtained. He was not much more successful in his endeavours to engage carpenters in New York, and it was with considerable difficulty that these temporary lodgments were erected.

The agency for purchasing winter covering for the troops was offered to almost every merchant in New York, but such was the danger of engaging in so obnoxious an employment, that not only those who were sincerely attached to the resistance now made by America to the views of administration, but those also, who were in secret friendly to those views, refused undertaking it, and declared, "that they never would supply any article for the benefit of men, who were sent as enemies to their country."

In great Britain, a new parliament was assembled, and the king in his opening speech informed them, "that a most daring spirit of resistance and disobedience still prevailed in Massachussetts, and had broken

broken forth in fresh violences of a very criminal nature; that the most proper and effectual measures had been taken to prevent these mischiefs; and that they might depend upon a firm resolution, to withstand every attempt to weaken or impair the supreme authority of the legislature over all the dominions of the crown."

The addresses proposed re-echoed the sentiments of the speech, and amendments offered were rejected in both houses by very great majorities*. Yet the business respecting America was not promply entered into. The administration seems to have hesitated on the course to be adopted, and the cabinet is said to have been divided respecting future measures. The few friends of conciliation availed themselves of this delay, to bring forward propositions, which might restore harmony to the different parts of the empire. Lord Chatham was not yet dead. "This splendid orb," to use the bold metaphor of Mr. Burke, "had not yet set for ever. The western horizon yet blazed with his descending glory," and he determined to employ the few remaining moments of his life in the service of his country. Taking a prophetic view of the future course of events, he demonstrated the impossibility of subjugating America, and urged with all the powers of his vast mind, the immediate removal of the troops from Boston, as a measure indispensably necessary, in order to open the way for an

* Belsham.

adjustment

adjustment of the present differences with the colonies. Not discouraged by the great majority by which this motion was negatived, he brought forward a bill for settling the troubles in America, which was also rejected by sixty one to thirty two voices.

The day after the rejection of this bill, Lord North moved in the house of commons an address to his Majesty, in which it was declared, that from a serious consideration of the American papers, "they find that a rebellion actually exists in the province of Massachussetts Bay." In the course of the debate on this address, several professional gentlemen spoke with the utmost contempt* of the military character of the Americans; and General Grant, who ought to have known better, declared that "at the head of five regiments of infantry, he would undertake to traverse the whole country, and drive the inhabitants from one end of the continent to the other." The address proposed was carried by two hundred and eighty eight, to one hundred and six; and, on a conference, the house of lords agreed to join in it. Lord

* Mr. Gordon, represents the military gentlemen to have said, when speaking of the Americans; "they are neither soldiers, nor ever can be made so, being naturally of a pusillanimous disposition, and utterly incapable of any sort of order or discipline; and by their laziness, uncleanliness, and radical defect of constitution, they are disabled from going through the service of a campaign; but will melt away with sickness, before they can face an enemy; —so that a slight force will be more than sufficient for their complete reduction."

North

North soon after moved a bill for restraining the trade and commerce of the New England provinces, and prohibiting them from carrying on the fisheries on the banks of Newfoundland.

While this bill was depending, and only vengeance was breathed by the supporters of the present system, his lordship, to the astonishment of the house, suddenly moved, what he termed, his conciliatory proposition*. Its amount was, that parliament

* This resolution proposed, "That when the governor, council, and assembly, or general court of any of his Majesty's provinces, or colonies in America, shall propose to make provision, according to the condition, circumstances, and situation of such province or colony, for contributing their proportion to the common defence (such proportion to be raised under the authority of the general court, or general assembly, of such province or colony, and disposable by parliament) and shall engage to make provision also, for the support of the civil government, and the administration of justice in such province or colony, it will be proper, if such proposal should be approved by his Majesty and the two houses of parliament, and for so long as such provision should be made accordingly, to forbear, in respect of such province or colony, to levy any duties, tax, or assessment, or to impose any further duty, tax, or assessment; except only such duties as it may be expedient to continue to levy or to impose for the regulation of the commerce, the neat produce of the duties last-mentioned, to be carried to the account of such province, colony, or plantation respectively."

This resolution was communicated to Congress, on the thirtieth of May, in the following manner;—"A member informed the Congress that a gentleman just arrived from London, had brought with

parliament would, forbear to tax any colony, which should tax itself in such a sum, as would be perfectly

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with him a paper, which he says, he received from Lord North, and which was written at the desire of his lordship, by Mr. Grey Cooper, under secretary to the treasury, and as the gentleman understood it to be his lordship's desire that it should be communicated to the Congress, for that purpose he had put it into his hands. The member further observed, that he had shewn the paper to a member near him, who was well acquainted with the hand writing of Mr. Cooper, and that he verily believes the paper was written by Mr. Cooper. The paper being read is as follows:

"That it is earnestly hoped by all the real friends of the Americans, that the terms expressed in the resolution of the 20th of February last, will be accepted by all the colonies, who have the least affection for their king and country, or a just sense of their own interest. That these terms are honourable for Great Britain, and safe for the colonies. That if the colonies are not blinded by faction, these terms will remove every grievance relative to taxation, and be the basis of a compact between the colonies and the mother country.

"That the people in America ought, on every consideration, to be satisfied with them, that no further relaxation can be admitted.

"The temper and spirit of the nation was so much against concessions, that if it were the intention of the administration, they could not carry the question.

"But administation have no such intention, as they are fully and firmly persuaded, that further concessions would be injurious to the colonies as well as to Great Britain.

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fectly satisfactory. Far short as was the proposition of the demands of America, and apparent as

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"That there is not the least probability of a change of administration.

"That they are perfectly united in opinion, and determined to pursue the most effectual measures, and to use the whole force of the kingdom, if it be found necessary, to reduce the rebellious and refractory provinces and colonies.

"There is so great a spirit in the nation against the Congress, that the people will bear the temporary distress of a stoppage of the American trade.

"They may depend on this to be true."

This paper was ordered to lie on the table, and the resolution which had been referred to Congress by the legislatures of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, was not acted on till the last of July, sometime after hostilities had commenced, when it was resolved—"That the colonies of America are entitled to the sole and exclusive privilege of giving and granting their own money. That this involves a right of deliberating whether they will make any gift, for what purposes it shall be made, and what shall be its amount; and that it is a high breach of this privilege for any body of men, extraneous to their constitutions, to proscribe the purposes for which money shall be levied on them, to take to themselves the authority of judging of their conditions, circumstances, and situations, and of determining the amount of the contribution to be levied.

"That as the colonies possess a right of appropriating their gifts, so are they entitled at all times, to enquire into their application, to see that they be not wasted among the venal and corrupt for the purpose of undermining the civil rights of the givers; nor yet be diverted to the support of standing armies, inconsistent with their freedom, and subversive of their quiet. To propose, therefore, as this resolution does, that the monies given by the colonies shall be subject

as it must have been that it could not be accepted; it was received with indignation by the majority of the

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subject to the disposal of parliament alone, is to propose that they shall relinquish this right of enquiry, and put it in the power of others to render their gifts ruinous, in proportion as they are liberal.

"That this privilege of giving or withholding our monies, is an important barrier against the undue exertion of prerogative, which, if left altogether without controul, may be exercised to our great oppression; and all history shews how efficacious is its intercession for redress of grievances, and re-establishment of rights, and how improvident it would be to part with so powerful a mediator.

"We are of opinion that the proposition contained in this resolution is unreasonable and invidious; unreasonable, because, if we declare we accede to it, we declare without reservation, we will purchase the favour of parliament, not knowing at the same time at what price they will be pleased to estimate their favour; it is invidious, because, individual colonies, having bid and bidden again, till they find the avidity of the seller too great for all their power to satisfy, are then to return into opposition, divided from their sister colonies, whom the minister will have previously detached by a grant of easier terms, or by an artful procrastination of a definitive answer.

"That the suspension of the exercise of their pretended power of taxation, being expressly made commensurate with the continuance of our gifts, these must be perpetual to make that so. Whereas no experience has shewn that a gift of perpetual revenue secures a perpetual return of duty or of kind disposition. On the contrary, the parliament itself, wisely attentive to this observation,

the house, and the administration found it necessary, so to explain the measure as to shew that it was

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is in the established practise of granting their supplies from year to year only.

"Desirous and determined as we are, to consider, in the most dispassionate view, every seeming advance towards a reconciliation made by the British parliament, let our brethren of Britain reflect what would have been the sacrifice to men of free spirits, had even fair terms been proffered, as these insidious proposals were, with circumstances of insult and defiance. A proposition to give our money, accompanied with large fleets and armies, seems addressed to our fears rather than to our freedom. With what patience would Britons have received articles of treaty from any power on earth when borne on the point of the bayonet by military plenipotentiaries?

"We think the attempt unnecessary to raise upon us by force or by threats, our proportionable contributions to the common defence, when all know, and themselves acknowledge, we have fully contributed, whenever called upon to do so, in the character of freemen.

"We are of opinion, it is not just that the colonies should be required to oblige themselves to other contributions, while Great Britain possesses a monopoly of their trade. This of itself lays them under heavy contributions. To demand, therefore, additional aids, in the form of a tax, is to demand the double of their equal proportion. If we are to contribute equally with the other parts of the empire, let us equally with them, enjoy free commerce with the whole world. But while the restrictions on our trade shut to us the resources of wealth, is it just we should bear all other burthens, equally with those to whom every resource is open?

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was in maintenance of their right to tax the colonies. Before it could be adopted, Lord North condescended

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"We conceive that the British parliament has no right to intermeddle with our provisions for the support of civil government, or administration of justice. The provisions we have made are such as please ourselves, and are agreeable to our circumstances. They answer the substantial purposes of government and of justice, and other purposes than these should not be answered. We do not mean that our people should be burthened with oppressive taxes, to provide sinecures for the idle or the wicked, under the colour of providing for a civil list. While parliament pursue their plan of civil government within their own jurisdiction, we also hope to pursue ours without molestation.

"We are of opinion the proposition is altogether unsatisfactory; because it imports only a suspension of the mode, not a renunciation of the pretended right, to tax us. Because, too, it does not propose to repeal the several acts of parliament, passed for the purposes of restraining the trade, and altering the form of government of one of our colonies; extending the boundaries and changing the government of Quebec; enlarging the jurisdiction of the courts of admiralty and vice admiralty; taking from us the right of a trial by a jury of the vicinage, in cases affecting both life and property; transporting us into other countries to be tried for criminal offences; exempting, by mock trial, the murderers of colonists from punishment; and quartering soldiers upon us in times of profound peace. Nor do they renounce the power of suspending our own legislatures, and of legislating for us themselves, in all cases whatsoever. On the contrary, to shew they mean no discontinuance of injury, they pass acts, at the very time of holding out this proposi-

ed to make the dangerous, and not very reputable acknowledgment that it was a proposition designed to

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tion, for restraining the commerce and fisheries of the province of New England, and for interdicting the trade of other colonies with all foreign nations, and with each other. This proves unequivocally they mean not to relinquish the exercise of indiscriminate legislation over us.

"Upon the whole, this proposition seems to have been held up to the world, to deceive it into a belief that there was nothing in dispute between us, but the mode of levying taxes, and that the parliament having now been so good as to give up this, the colonists are unreasonable, if not perfectly satisfied; whereas, in truth, our adversaries still claim a right of demanding *ad libitum*, and of taxing us themselves to the full amount of their demand, if we do not comply with it. This leaves us without any thing we can call property. But, what is of more importance, and what is this proposal they keep out of sight, as if no such point was now in contest between us, they claim a right to alter our charters, and establish laws, and leave us without any security for our lives or liberties. The proposition seems also to have been calculated more particularly to lull into fatal security our well affected fellow subjects on the other side of the water, till time should be given for the operation of those arms, which a British minister pronounced, would instantaneously reduce the 'cowardly,' sons of America to unreserved submission. But when the world reflects, how inadequate to justice, are these vaunted terms; when it attends to the rapid and bold succession of injuries which, during a course of eleven years, have been aimed at these colonies; when it reviews the pacific and respectful expostulations, which, during that whole time, were the sole arms we opposed to them; when it observes that our complaints were either not

to divide America, while it united Great Britain*. It was transmitted to the governors of the several

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not heard at all, or were answered with new and accumulated injuries; when it recollects that the minister himself, on an early occasion, declared "that he would never treat with America, till he had brought her to his feet", and that an avowed partizan of ministry has more lately announced against us the dreadful sentence, "*delenda est Carthago*;" that this was done in presence of a British senate, and being unreproved by them, must be taken to be their own sentiment, especially as the purpose has already in part been carried into execution, by their treatment of Boston, and burning of Charleston; when it considers the great armaments with which they have invaded us, and the circumstances of cruelty with which they have commenced and prosecuted hostilities: when these things, we say, are laid together and attentively considered, can the world be deceived into an opinion that we are unreasonable, or can it hesitate to believe with us, that nothing but our own exertions may defeat the ministerial sentence of death, or abject submission."

* In the speech introducing this resolution, the minister said, "if their opposition be only founded on the principles which they pretend, they must agree with this proposition, but if they have designs in contemplation different from those they avow, their refusal will convict them of duplicity." He further declared, "that he did not expect his proposition to be generally relished by the Americans. "But," said he, "if it does no good in the colonies, it will do good here; it will unite the people of England, by holding out to them a distinct object of revenue." He added further, "as it tends to unite England, it is likely to disunite America, for if only one province accept the offer, their confederacy, which alone makes them formidable, will be broken." RAMSAY, vol. i. p. 163.

colonies

colonies in a circular letter, from Lord Dartmouth, with directions to use their utmost influence to procure its adoption. These endeavours, however, were no where successful. The colonists were universally impressed with too strong a conviction of the importance of union, and now understood too well the real principle of the contest, to permit themselves to be divided or deceived by this proposition, which was conciliatory only in name. After the passage of the bill for restraining the trade of New England, information was received that the inhabitants of the middle and southern colonies were supporting their northern brethren in every measure of opposition. In consequence of this intelligence, a second bill was brought in for imposing similar restrictions on the colonies of East and West Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, and the counties on the Delaware, which was passed without much opposition. The favourite colonies of New York and North Carolina were thought less disaffected than the others, and were not included in this bill. Fortunately, some time afterwards, the House of Commons refused to hear a petition offered by Mr. Burke, from the legislature of New York, which alone had declined according to the resolutions of the general congress, because, as was suggested by the minister, it contained claims incompatible with the supremacy of parliament.

This haughty rejection had some tendency to convince those of that province, who cherished the hope of producing accommodation by milder measures than had been adopted by their sister colonies, that there was no medium between resistance and absolute submission.

Notwithstanding the ill success which had heretofore attended the efforts of the minority, a series of resolutions was brought forward by Mr. Burke, enforced by a most able and eloquent speech, the object of which was to restore the ancient state of things between the mother country and her colonies; but these resolutions experienced the same fate which had attended all other truly conciliatory propositions.

The king's speech, and the proceedings of parliament served only to convince the leaders of the opposition in America, that they must indeed prepare to meet "mournful events." They had flattered themselves that the union of the colonies, the petition of Congress to the king, and the address to the people of Great Britain, would have produced some happy effects; but the measures now adopted, in a great measure, removed the delusion. The new provincial Congress of Massachussetts published a resolution, informing the people, that from the disposition manifested by the British parliament and ministry, there was real cause to fear, that the reasonable

reasonable and just applications of that continent to Great Britain for peace, liberty, and safety, would not meet with favourable reception; that on the contrary, from the large reinforcements of troops expected in that colony, the tenor of intelligence from Great Britain, and general appearances, they had reason to apprehend that the sudden destruction of that colony in particular was intended.

They urged, therefore, in the strongest terms, the militia in general, and the minute men in particular, to spare neither time, pains, nor expence, at so critical a juncture, to perfect themselves in military discipline. They also passed resolutions for procuring and making fire-arms and bayonets.

In the mean time, delegates for the ensuing Congress were chosen, even in New York, where the influence of the administration in the legislature, had been sufficient to prevent an adoption of the recommendations of the former Congress, and where the people were much divided, a convention was chosen for the sole purpose of electing members, who should represent that province in the grand council of the colonies.

In New England, although a determination not to commence hostility appears to have been maintained, an expectation of it, and a settled purpose to repel it, universally prevailed.

It was not long before the firmness of this resolution was put to the test.

A con-

A considerable quantity of military stores had been collected at the town of Concord, about eighteen miles from Boston, which General Gage proposed to destroy. On the night preceding the 19th of April, Lieutenant Colonel Smith, and Major Pitcairn, with the grenadiers and light infantry of the army, amounting to eight or nine hundred men, were detached on this service. Notwithstanding the secrecy and dispatch which were used, and although some officers on horseback had, before the marching of the detachment, scoured the roads, and secured such people as they fell in with, the country was alarmed by messengers sent out by Doctor Warren, some of whom eluded the vigilance of the patrols; and, on the arrival of the British troops at Lexington, about five in the morning, part of the company of militia belonging to that town, amounting to about seventy men, were found on the parade under arms.

Major Pitcairn, who led the van, galloped up, calling out, "Disperse, rebels! throw down your arms, and disperse!" The soldiers at the same time ran up huzzaing; some scattered guns were fired first, which were immediately followed by a general discharge, and the firing was continued so long as any of the militia appeared. Eight men were killed, and several wounded.

The detachment then proceeded to Concord,

the commanding officer having previously dispatched six companies of light infantry to possess two bridges which lay at some distance beyond the town; while the main body of the detachment was employed in destroying the stores in Concord, some minute men and militia, who were collected from that place and its neighbourhood, having orders not to give the first fire, approached one of the bridges, as if to pass it in the character of common travellers. They were fired on, and two men killed. The fire was immediately returned, and a skirmish ensued, in which the regulars were worsted, and compelled to retreat with some loss. The country was now generally alarmed, and the people rushed from every quarter to the scene of action. The King's troops were attacked on all sides. Skirmish after skirmish ensued, and they were driven from post to post into Lexington.

Fortunately for the British, General Gage did not entertain precisely the same opinion of the military character of the Americans, which had been expressed by General Grant and other officers in the House of Commons. Apprehending the expedition to be not entirely without hazard, he had, in the morning, detached Lord Percy with sixteen companies of foot, a corps of marines, and two pieces of artillery, to support Lieutenant Colonel Smith. This seasonable reinforcement reached Lexington about the time of the arrival

arrival of the retreating party, and with their field pieces kept the provincials at a distance, and gave the grenadiers and light infantry time to breathe. But as soon as they recommenced their march, the attack was recommenced also, and an irregular, but very galling fire was kept up on either flank, as well as in front and rear, from the stone fences which abound in that quarter, till they arrived about sunset on the common of Charlestown. From thence, they immediately passed over the neck to Bunker's Hill, where they remained secure for the night, under the protection of their ships of war, and early next morning crossed over Charlestown ferry to Boston.

In this action the loss of the British in killed, wounded, and prisoners, was two hundred and seventy-three, while that of the provincials did not exceed ninety. However trivial this affair may have been in itself, it was, in its consequences, of the utmost importance. It was the commencement of a long and obstinate war, and it had no inconsiderable influence on that war, by increasing the confidence which the Americans felt in themselves, and encouraging opposition by the hope of its being successful. It supported the opinion which had been taken up with some degree of doubt, that courage and patriotism were ample substitutes for any deficiency in the knowledge of tactics, and that their skill as marksmen

gave them a great superiority over their adversaries.

Although the previous state of things had been such, as plainly rendered the commencement of hostilities unavoidable, each party seemed anxious to throw the blame on its opponent. The British officers alleged that they were fired on from a stone-wall, before they attacked the militia company at Lexington; while, on the part of the Americans, numerous depositions were taken, all proving that, both at Lexington and the bridge near Concord, the first fire was received by them. The statements made by the Americans are rendered probable, not only by the testimony which supports them, but by other circumstances. The company of militia at Lexington did not exceed in numbers one-ninth of the enemy, and it can scarcely be conceived that, in the perilous situation in which they were placed, their friends would have provoked their fate by commencing a fire on an enraged soldiery. It is also a circumstance of no inconsiderable weight, that the Americans had uniformly sought to cover their proceedings with the letter of the law; and even after the affair at Lexington, they had, at the bridge beyond Concord, made a point of receiving the first fire. It is probable that the orders given by General Gage, prohibited the detachment, under Lieutenant Colonel Smith, from attacking the pro-

provincials, unless previously assaulted by them; but it seems almost certain, that such orders, if given, were disobeyed.

The provincial Congress, desirous of manifesting the necessity under which the militia had acted, transmitted to their agents the depositions which had been taken relative to the late action, with a letter to the inhabitants of Great Britain, stating that hostilities had been commenced against them, and detailing the circumstances which had attended that event.

But they did not confine themselves to addresses: they immediately passed a vote for raising thirteen thousand six hundred men in Massachussetts, to be commanded by General Ward; and for calling on New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, for their respective quotas of troops, so as to complete an army of thirty thousand men for the common defence. They also authorised the Receiver General to borrow one hundred thousand pounds on the credit of the colony, and to issue securities for the repayment thereof with an interest of six per cent.

The neighbouring colonies hastened to furnish the men required of them, and, in the mean time, such numbers voluntarily assembled, that many were dismissed in consequence of a defect of means to subsist them in the field. The king's troops were now themselves closely blocked up in the

peninsula of Boston, and their communication with the country entirely cut off.

On receiving intelligence of the battle of Lexington, the people of the city and province of New York appeared to hesitate no longer. The general spirit of the colonies obtained there also the ascendancy; yet the royal party remained very formidable, and it was deemed advisable to march a body of Connecticut troops into the neighbourhood, with the ostensible purpose of protecting the town against some British regiments daily expected from Ireland, but with the real design of encouraging and strengthening their friends.

About the same time, that active spirit, which, at the commencement of hostilities, seemed in so remarkable a degree to have pervaded New England, manifested itself in an expedition of considerable merit.

The possession of Tyconderoga and Crown Point, and the command of lakes George and Champlain, were objects of essential importance in the approaching conflict. It was well known that these posts were very weakly defended; and it was believed that the feeble garrisons remaining in them were the less to be dreaded, because they were in a state of perfect security, entirely unapprehensive of an attack from any quarter whatever. Under these impressions, some gentlemen of Connecticut, at the head of whom were Messieurs Deane,

Deane, Wooster, and Parsons, formed the bold design of seizing these fortresses by surprise; and borrowed, on their individual credit, a small sum of money from the legislature of the colony, to enable them to carry on the enterprise. As success depended absolutely on secrecy and dispatch, it was determined not to encounter the delay and danger of discovery, which would attend their waiting to receive the sanction of Congress; and it was deemed most advisable to proceed immediately with a sufficient quantity of ammunition, in the confidence, that the number of men necessary for the expedition might be raised with more advantage among the hardy mountaineers inhabiting the country that borders on the lakes. For this purpose, about forty volunteers set out from Connecticut towards Bennington, where the projectors of the expedition proposed meeting with Colonel Ethan Allen, and engaging him to head their enterprise, and to raise the men which would be required to aid them in its execution.

Colonel Allen very readily entered into their views, and engaged to meet them with the requisite number of men, at Castleton, whither they were to repair as soon as the necessary preparations could be made. At this place about two hundred and seventy men assembled, who were joined by Colonel Arnold. This officer had marched to Boston with a body of Connecticut troops, imme-

diately after the battle of Lexington; and without having had the slightest communication with those who had undertaken the enterprise, had engaged the Committee of Safety of Massachussetts to authorize him to raise four hundred men for the same object. He joined Colonel Allen, with whom he was associated in the command, and they reached lake Champlain, opposite to Tyconderoga, in the night of the ninth of May. With some difficulty boats were obtained sufficient for the transportation of the troops; and both Allen and Arnold embarked with the first body, consisting of eighty three men, who effected their landing without being discovered. They immediately marched against the fort, which was completely surprised, and surrendered without firing a single gun. The garrison, consisting of only forty-four rank and file, commanded by a Captain and one Lieutenant, was incapable of making any resistance.

Tyconderoga having fallen, Colonel Seth Warren was detached to take possession of Crown Point, where a serjeant and twelve men performed garrison duty. This service was immediately executed, and the place was taken without opposition.

At Crown Point, as well as at Tyconderoga, military stores fell into the hands of the Americans, of very considerable value to them in their present situation.

The pass at Skenesborough was seized at the same

same time by a detachment of the volunteers from Connecticut.

To complete the objects of the expedition, it was necessary to obtain the command of the lakes, which could be effected only by seizing a sloop of war lying at St. John's. This service was effected by Arnold, who, having manned and armed, for the purpose, a schooner found in South Bay, surprised the sloop, and took possession of it without opposition.

Thus, by the enterprise of a few individuals, and without the loss of a single man, were acquired the very important ports of Tyconderoga and Crown Point, with the command of the lakes on which they stand. Nor was it among the smallest of the advantages attending the expedition, that the success with which it was crowned, tended to raise still higher the confidence which the Americans felt in themselves.

Intelligence of the capture of Tyconderoga was immediately communicated, by an express, to Congress, then just assembled at Philadelphia; and the resolution entered into in consequence of that event, furnishes strong evidence of the solicitude felt by that body, to exonerate the government, in the opinion of the people at large, from all suspicion of aggression, or of provoking a continuance of the war beyond the limits of self-defence. Indubitable evidence was asserted to have

have been received, of a design formed by the British ministry for a cruel invasion of the colonies from the province of Canada, for the purpose of destroying their lives and liberties; and it was averred that some steps had actually been taken to carry this design into execution. To a justifiable desire of securing themselves against so heavy a calamity, was attributed the seizure of that post by the neighbouring inhabitants; and it was recommended to the committees of New York and Albany, immediately to take measures for the removal of the cannon and military stores from Tyconderoga to some place on the south end of lake George, there to be preserved in safety. An exact inventory of the stores thus removed, was directed to be taken, "in order that they might be safely returned, when the restoration of the former harmony between Great Britain and the colonies, so ardently wished for by the latter, should render it prudent and consistent with the over-ruling law of self-preservation."

Measures, however, were afterwards adopted to maintain the posts which had been taken; but probably, from an apprehension that their having thus seized the keys of Canada, might alarm the people of that province, and have some tendency to impress them with sentiments of hostility towards the united colonies, a resolution was soon afterwards entered into, declaring, that as Congress

gress had nothing more in view than the defence of the colonies, no expedition or incursion ought to be undertaken, or made by any colony, or body of colonists, against or into Canada.

This resolution was translated into the French language, and transmitted to the people of that province, accompanied by a letter*, in which all

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* "*To the oppressed Inhabitants of Canada.*

"Friends and Countrymen!

"Alarmed by the designs of an arbitrary ministry to extirpate the rights and liberties of all America, a sense of common danger conspired with the dictates of humanity, in urging us to call your attention, by our late Address, to this very important object.

"Since the conclusion of the late war, we have been happy in considering you as fellow-subjects; and from the commencement of the present plan for subjugating the Continent, we have viewed you as fellow-sufferers with us. As we were both entitled by the bounty of an indulgent Creator to freedom, and being both devoted by the cruel edicts of a despotic administration to common ruin, we perceived the fate of the protestant and catholic colonies to be strongly linked together, and therefore invited you to join with us in resolving to be free, and in rejecting, with disdain, the fetters of slavery, however artfully polished.

"We most sincerely condole with you on the arrival of that day, in the course of which the sun could not shine on a single freeman in all your extensive dominion. Be assured, that your unmerited degradation has engaged the most unfeigned pity of your sister colonies; and we flatter ourselves you will not,

all their feelings, and among others, the known attachment of the Canadians to France, were very dexterously

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not, by tamely bearing the yoke, suffer that pity to be supplanted by contempt.

"When hardy attempts are made to deprive men of rights bestowed by the Almighty, when avenues are cut through the most solemn compacts for the admission of despotism, when the plighted faith of government ceases to give security to dutiful subjects, and when the insidious stratagems and manœuvres of peace become more terrible than the sanguinary operations of war; it is high time for them to assert those rights, and, with honest indignation, oppose the torrent of oppression rushing in upon them.

"By the introduction of your present form of government, or rather, present form of tyranny, you and your wives and your children are made slaves. You have nothing that you can call your own, and all the fruits of your labour and industry may be taken from you, whenever an avaricious governor and a rapacious council may incline to demand them. You are liable by their edicts to be transported into foreign countries, to fight battles in which you have no interest, and to spill your blood in conflicts from which neither honor nor emolument can be derived: Nay, the enjoyment of your very religion, on the present system, depends on a legislature in which you have no share, and over which you have no controul; and your priests are exposed to expulsion, banishment, and ruin, whenever their wealth and possessions furnish sufficient temptation. They cannot be sure that a virtuous prince will always fill the throne; and should a wicked and careless king concur with a wicked ministry in extracting the strength and treasure of your country, it is impossible to conceive to what variety and to what extremes of wretchedness you may under the present establishment be reduced.

"We

dexterously assailed; and the effort was very earnestly made, to kindle in their bosoms that enthusiastic

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"We are informed you have already been called upon to waste your lives in a contest with us. Should you, by complying in this instance, assent to your new establishment, and a war break out with France, your wealth and your sons may be sent to perish in expeditions against their islands in the West Indies.

"It cannot be presumed that these considerations will have no weight with you, or that you are so lost to all sense of honour. We can never believe that the present race of Canadians are so degenerated, as to possess neither the spirit, the gallantry, nor the courage of their ancestors. You certainly will not permit the infamy and disgrace of such pusillanimity to rest on your own heads, and the consequences of it on your children for ever.

"We, for our parts, are determined to live free, or not at all; and are resolved that posterity shall never reproach us with having brought slaves into the world.

"Permit us again to repeat, that we are your friends, not your enemies, and be not imposed upon by those who may endeavour to create animosities. The taking of the fort and military stores at Ty conderoga and Crown Point, and the armed vessels on the lake, was dictated by the great law of self-preservation. They were intended to annoy us, and to cut off that friendly intercourse and communication which has hitherto subsisted between you and us. We hope it has given you no uneasiness, and you may rely on our assurances, that these colonies will pursue no measures whatever, but such as friendship, and a regard for our mutual safety and interest, may suggest.

"As our concern for your welfare entitles us to your friendship, we presume you will not, by doing us injury, reduce us to the disagreeable necessity of treating you as enemies.

"We yet entertain hopes of your uniting with us in the defence of our common liberty; and there is yet reason to believe, that

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thusiastic love of liberty which was too strongly felt by the authors of the letter, to permit the belief that it could be any where inoperative.

The middle and southern colonies, though not so forward as the northern, were every where preparing for hostilities, and the established government was, in all of them, laid aside.

In Virginia, Lord Dunmore, the governor, had just returned to Williamsburg, from an expedition against the Indians, in which his arms had been crowned with success, and he had thereby acquired a considerable degree of popularity. Presuming, perhaps, too much on the public favour of the moment, and dissatisfied with some recommendations concerning the militia and independent companies, made by the colonial convention which had assembled in Richmond, principally for the purpose of electing delegates to Congress; he employed the Captain of an armed vessel then lying in James's river, a few miles from Williamsburg, to convey, by night, on board his ship, with a detachment of his marines, a part of the powder in the magazine belonging to the colony.

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should we join in imploring the attention of our sovereign, to the unmerited and unparalleled oppressions of his American subjects, he will at length be undeceived, and forbid a licentious ministry any longer to riot in the ruins of the rights of mankind."

The committee appointed to draw this letter consisted of Mr. Jay, Mr. Samuel Adams, and Mr. Deane.

This measure, though conducted with great secrecy, was by some means discovered; and the people of the town assembled next morning, in arms, for the purpose of demanding restitution of the property which had been taken. The magistrates prevailed on them to disperse without the commission of violence; and presented an address to the governor, remonstrating against the removal of the powder, which they alleged to be the more injurious, because it was necessary for their defence, in the event of an insurrection among their slaves.

The governor acknowledged that the powder had been removed by his orders to a place of perfect security, because he did not think it safe in the magazine; but he gave the most explicit assurances that he would restore it, if an insurrection of the slaves should render such a measure necessary.

Unsatisfactory as was this answer, no further means were used in Williamsburg for the recovery of the property which had been carried off; but from this time, nightly patroles were kept for the future protection of the magazine.

This subject was not permitted to pass off quietly by the inhabitants of the interior country. Meetings were held in several counties, and the conduct of the governor greatly condemned. In Hanover and King William, the independent compa-

companies, at the instance of Mr. Patrick Henry*, a member of Congress, assembled and set out for Williamsburg with the avowed design of compelling a restitution of the powder, or of obtaining the value thereof. They were, however, stopped on the way by the active interposition of a Mr. Braxton, who obtained from the king's receiver-general a bill for the value of the property which had been removed, with which he returned to the companies, and prevailed upon them to relinquish a further prosecution of their enterprise†.

The alarm occasioned by this movement induced Lady Dunmore, with the governor's family, to retire on board the Fowey man of war in James river, whilst his lordship fortified his palace, in which he placed a detachment of marines as a garrison. From thence he published a proclamation, in which he charged those who had procured the bill from the receiver-general, with rebellious practices. The country, however, took part against him, and his own conduct was generally censured, while that of Mr. Henry was very

* The same gentleman who had introduced into the assembly of Virginia THE original resolutions against the STAMP ACT.

† The independent companies in the upper part of the northern neck, also assembled, to the number of about six hundred men, and proceeded on horseback as far as Fredericksburg, where a council was held, in which Richard Henry Lee, then on his way to Congress, presided; and who advised THEIR return to their respective homes.

highly

highly applauded. This state of agitation was increased by some letters written by Lord Dunmore to the secretary of state, containing sentiments thought hostile to America. These letters were made public about this time, and were very severely censured.

While the public mind was considerably irritated by these causes, Lord North's conciliatory proposition was received, and an assembly was suddenly called, to whose consideration it was submitted. The governor used all his address to produce, in the assembly, a disposition favourable to the acceptance of this proposition; but it was rejected here as in the other colonies, because it obviously involved a surrender of the whole subject in contest *.

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* In the address of the house of Burgesses to the governor, in answer to his speech at opening the session, they say, in speaking of the conciliatory proposition of Lord North, which had been recommended to them; "We examined it minutely, we viewed it in every point of light in which we were able to place it; and with pain and disappointment, we must ultimately declare it only changes the form of oppression without lightening its burden." They closed with these expressive words: "We have decently remonstrated with parliament; they have added new injuries to the old. We have wearied our king with supplications; he has not deigned to answer us. We have appealed to the native honour and justice of the British nation; their efforts in our favour have been hitherto ineffectual. What

One of the first measures of the assembly was the appointment of a committee to enquire, generally, into the causes of the late disturbances, and particularly to examine the state of the magazine. Although this building belonged to the colony, it was in the custody of the governor, who appointed the keeper; and to him it was necessary to apply, in order to gain admittance. Before this was obtained, some persons of the neighbourhood broke into the magazine, one of whom was wounded by a spring gun; and it was found that the powder, not carried away, had been buried and very much injured, and the guns deprived of their locks. This circumstance excited so great a ferment, that the governor thought proper privately to withdraw from the palace, and go on board the Fowey man of war, then lying at York Town, twelve miles below Williamsburg. Several letters afterwards passed between him and the legislature, containing reciprocal complaints of each other, in the course of which they pressed his return to the seat of government, while he in-

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then remains to be done? That we commit our injuries to the even-handed justice of that Being who doth no wrong; earnestly beseeching him to illuminate the councils, and prosper the endeavours of those to whom America hath confided her hopes, that through their wise direction, we may again see re-united the blessings of liberty and property, and the most permanent harmony with Great Britain."—*Gordon*, Vol. II, page 90.

sisted

sisted on their coming on board the Fowey. They were content that he should, even there, give his assent to some material bills which were prepared; but he refused to do so, and the assembly dissolved itself, the members being generally chosen on a convention then about to meet at Richmond.

Thus terminated for ever the royal government in Virginia.

In South Carolina, a provincial congress was called by the committee of correspondence, so soon as intelligence of the battle of Lexington was received. An association was formed, the members of which pledged themselves to each other to repel force by force whenever the continental or provincial congress should determine it to be necessary, and declared that they would hold all those persons inimical to the colonies, who should refuse to subscribe to it. They also determined immediately to put the town and province in a respectable posture of defence; in pursuance of which resolution, they agreed to raise two regiments of infantry, and one of rangers.

While this congress was in session, Lord William Campbell, who had been appointed their governor, arrived in the province, and was received with all those demonstrations of joy which had been usual on such occasions. The congress waited on him with an address, in which they disclosed to him the true causes of their present pro-

ceedings; and declared, that no love of innovation, no desire of altering the constitution of government, no lust of independence, had the least influence upon their councils; but that they had been compelled to associate and take up arms, solely for the preservation, and in defence of their lives, liberties, and properties. They entreated his excellency to make such a representation of the state of the colony, and of their true motives, as to assure his majesty, that he had no subjects who more desired sincerely to testify their loyalty and affection, or would be more willing to devote their lives and fortunes in his real service. His lordship returned a very mild and prudent answer*.

For some time Lord William Campbell conducted himself with so much apparent moderation, as to remain on good terms with the leaders of the opposition; but he was secretly exerting all the influence of his station in defeating their views, and was at length detected in carrying on some negociations with the Indians, and with the disaffected in the back country, who had refused to sign the association. These persons had been induced to believe that the inhabitants of the sea coast, in order to exempt their own tea from a trifling tax, were about to engage them in a contest, in which they would be deprived of their salt, osnaburgs, and other imported articles of absolute

* Gordon's History, Vol. II, page 82.

necessity.

necessity. The detection of these intrigues excited such a ferment among the people, that the governor was compelled to fly from Charlestown, and take refuge on board a ship of war in the river. The government was then, as elsewhere, taken entirely into the hands of men chosen by the people, and a large body of troops was ordered into that part of the country, which adhered to the royal cause, where many of the people, contrary to the advice of governor Campbell, had risen in arms. Unable to collect a sufficient force to repel so formidable an invasion, the leaders were seized, and their followers dispersed.

In North Carolina, governor Martin was also charged with fomenting a civil war, and exciting an insurrection among the negroes. Relying on the aid he expected from some of the back settlers, and from some highland emigrants, he made preparations for the defence of his palace; but the people taking the alarm before the troops he counted on were raised, he was compelled to fly for safety on board a sloop of war in Cape Fear River; soon after which, the committee resolved, that "no person or persons whatsoever should have any correspondence with him, on pain of being deemed enemies to the liberties of America, and dealt with accordingly."

So soon as Congress was in readiness to enter upon the public business, Mr. Hancock laid before

that body the depositions which had been taken for the purpose of shewing that, in the battle of Lexington, the king's troops were entirely the aggressors; together with the proceedings of the provincial assembly of Massachussetts on that occasion.

They had now arrived at the crisis to which things had for some time been rapidly tending; and it became necessary for the delegates of the other provinces finally to determine, either to embark with New England in actual war, or, by separating themselves from those colonies, to surrender the object for which they had so long jointly contended, and submit to that unlimited supremacy which was claimed by the British Parliament.

Even among the well-informed of the American people, the opinion that the contest between the mother country and her colonies would ultimately be decided by the sword, had not become general. The hope had been hitherto indulged by a great portion of the popular leaders, that the union of the colonies, the extent and serious aspect of the opposition, and the distress which their non-importation agreements would produce among the merchants and manufacturers of the parent state, would induce the administration to recede from the high pretensions which had been insisted on, and would restore that harmony and free intercourse which had formerly subsisted between the two countries,

and

and which they sincerely believed to be advantageous to both. This opinion had derived strength from the communications made to them by many of their zealous friends in England. The divisions and discontents of that country had been represented as much greater than the fact would justify; and the exhortations transmitted to them, to persevere in the honourable course which had been commenced with so much glory, had gene rally been accompanied with assurances, that success must yet crown their patriotic labours. Very many had engaged with zeal in the resistance made by America, and had acted on a full conviction of the correctness of the principles for which they contended, who would very reluctantly have engaged in the measures which had been adopted, had they really believed that those measures would have terminated in war. But each party counted too much on the divisions of the other, and each seems to have taken step after step in the hope that its adversary would yield the point in contest without resorting to open force. Thus, on both sides, the public feelings had been gradually conducted to a point which would in the first instance have been thought of with horror; and had been prepared for events, the contemplation of which, in the beginning of the controversy, would have alarmed the most intrepid. The sentiment now prevailing in the middle and southern colonies

was, that a reconciliation, on the terms proposed by America, was not even yet impracticable, and was devoutly to be wished; but that war, with all its hazards and its horrors, was to be preferred to a surrender of those rights for which they had contended, and to which they believed every British subject, wherever placed, to be unquestionably entitled.

They did not hesitate, therefore, which part of the alternative now offered them to embrace, and their delegates united cordially with those of their northern brethren in such measures as the present exigency required. It was unanimously determined, that as hostilities had actually commenced, and as large reinforcements to the British army were expected, these colonies should be immediately put in a state of defence, and that the militia of New York should be armed and trained, and kept in readiness to act at a moment's warning. It was also determined to embody a number of men, without delay, for the protection of the inhabitants of that place; but they appear not to have been authorized to oppose the landing of any troops which might have been ordered to that station by the crown. The convention of New York had already consulted Congress on the steps to be pursued by that colony in the event of the arrival of the troops daily expected at that place from Europe; and they had been advised to permit

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the soldiers to take possession of the barracks, and to remain there so long as they conducted themselves peaceably; but if they committed hostilities, or invaded private property, the inhabitants were then to repel force by force. Thus anxious was Congress, even after a battle had been fought, not to widen still further the breach between the two countries. In addition to the real wish for reconciliation, much felt by a majority of this body, the soundest policy directed that the people of America should engage in the arduous conflict which was approaching, with a perfect conviction that it was forced upon them, and that it had been occasioned by no fault of theirs, and by no intemperate conduct on the part of their leaders. The divisions existing in several of the states suggested the propriety of this conduct, even to those who despaired of deriving any other benefit from it than a greater degree of union among their own countrymen. In this spirit, they mingled with their resolutions for putting the country in a state of defence, others expressive of their most earnest wish for reconciliation with the mother country; to effect which, they determined on addressing once more an humble and dutiful petition to the king, and on adopting measures for opening a negociation, in order to accommodate the unhappy disputes subsisting between Great Britain and the colonies.

As no great confidence could now be placed in the success of pacific propositions, the resolution for putting the country in a state of defence was accompanied with others rendered necessary by that undetermined state between peace and war, in which America was now placed. All exports to those colonies which had not deputed members to Congress, were stopped; and all supplies of provisions, and of other necessaries to the British fisheries, were prohibited. Though this resolution was only a further prosecution of the system of commercial resistance which had been adopted before the commencement of hostilities, and was evidently provoked by the late acts of parliament; yet it seems to have been entirely unsuspected, and certainly produced very great distress. A few days after the adoption of this measure, it was resolved, that no bill of exchange drawn by any person belonging to the army or navy should be negociated, nor any money furnished to such person by the inhabitants of the colonies. All supplies of provisions, or other necessaries to the army or navy in Massachussett's Bay, and to any vessel employed in transporting British troops to America, or from one colony to another, were prohibited.

Massachussetts having stated the difficulties resulting from being without any regular form of government, "at a time when an army was to be raised to defend themselves against the butcheries and

and devastations of their implacable enemies," and having declared a readiness to conform to such general plan as Congress might direct for the colonies, and so to modify its particular government as to promote the interests of the union, and of all America; it was resolved, that no obedience is due to the act of parliament for altering the charter of that colony, nor to officers who, instead of observing that charter, seek its subversion.

The Governor and Lieutenant-Governor were, therefore, to be considered as absent, and their offices vacant. To avoid the intolerable inconveniences arising from a total suspension of government, especially at a time when General Gage had actually levied war, and was carrying on hostilities against his majesty's peaceable and loyal subjects of that colony; and, at the same time, to conform as nearly as possible to the substance and spirit of the charter; it was "recommended to the provincial convention to write letters to the inhabitants of the several places which are entitled to representation in Assembly, requesting them to choose such representatives, and that the assembly, when chosen, do elect counsellors; and that such assembly or council exercise the powers of government, until a governor of his majesty's appointment will consent to govern the colony according to its charter*."

These resolutions, occasioned by the peculiar

* Journals of Congress, page 115.

situation

situation of the country, were quickly followed by others of greater vigour, and denoting more decidedly the determination to prepare for the last resort of nations.

It was most earnestly recommended to the conventions of all the colonies, to use their utmost endeavours to provide the means of making gunpowder, and to obtain sufficient supplies of ammunition. Even the non-importation agreement was relaxed in favour of such vessels as should bring in cargoes of these precious materials. They were urged too, very seriously, to arm and discipline their militia, and so to class them that one-fourth should be minute men. In addition to this military force, recommendations were made for the raising of several regular corps for the service of the continent; and a general resolution was entered into, declaring, that any province thinking itself in danger might raise a body of regulars not exceeding one thousand men, which should be taken into the pay of the united colonies.

Congress also proceeded to organize the higher departments of the army.

Bills of credit to the amount of three millions * Spanish

* The ratio in which this sum was apportioned on the respective states was as follows:

New Hampshire	124,069½
Massachussetts' Bay	431,244
Carried over,	558,313½

Brought

Spanish milled dollars were emitted for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the war, and the twelve confederated colonies were pledged for their redemption. Articles of war for the government of the continental army were formed, though, as yet, the troops were raised under the authority of the states, without even a requisition from Congress, except in a few instances. A solemn dignified declaration, in the form of a manifesto, was prepared to be published to the army, in orders, and to the people from the pulpit. After detailing the causes of their opposition to the mother country, with all the energy of men feeling the injuries of which they complain, the manifesto exclaims, "But why should we enumerate our injuries in detail? By one statute it is declared, that parliament can of right make laws to bind us in all cases whatsoever. What is

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Brought forward	558,313½
Rhode Island	71,959½
Connecticut	248,139
New York	248,139
New Jersey	161,290½
Pennsylvania	372,208½
Delaware	37,219½
Maryland	310,174½
Virginia	496,278
North Carolina	248,139
South Carolina	248,139
	3,000,000

to

to defend us against so enormous, so unlimited a power? Not a single man of those who assume it is chosen by us, or is subject to our controul or influence; but, on the contrary, they are all of them exempt from the operation of such laws; and an American revenue, if not diverted from the ostensible purposes for which it is raised, would actually lighten their own burdens, in proportion as they increase ours. We saw the misery to which such despotism would reduce us. We for ten years incessantly and ineffectually besieged the throne as supplicants; we reasoned, we remonstrated with parliament in the most mild and decent language."

The measures adopted by administration to enforce the claims of Great Britain are then enumerated; after which the manifesto proceeds: "We are reduced to the alternative of choosing an unconditional submission to the tyranny of irritated ministers, or resistance by force. The latter is our choice. We have counted the cost of this contest, and find nothing so dreadful as voluntary slavery. Honour, justice, and humanity, forbid us tamely to surrender that freedom, which we received from our gallant ancestors, and which our innocent posterity have a right to receive from us. We cannot endure the infamy and guilt of resigning succeeding generations to that wretchedness which inevitably awaits them, if

if we basely entail hereditary bondage upon them.

"Our cause is just. Our union is perfect. Our internal resources are great; and, if necessary, foreign assistance is undoubtedly attainable. We gratefully acknowledge, as signal instances of divine favour towards us, that his providence would not permit us to be called into this severe controversy, until we were grown up to our present strength, had been previously exercised in warlike operation, and possessed of the means of defending ourselves. With hearts fortified with these animating reflections, we most solemnly, before God and the world, DECLARE, that, exerting the utmost energy of those powers, which our beneficent Creator hath graciously bestowed on us, the arms we have been compelled by our enemies to assume, we will, in defiance of every hazard, with unabating firmness and perseverance, employ for the preservation of our liberties; being with one mind resolved to die freemen rather than to live slaves.

"Lest this declaration should disquiet the minds of our friends and fellow-subjects in any part of the empire, we assure them, that we mean not to dissolve that union which has so long and so happily subsisted between us, and which we sincerely wish to see restored. Necessity has not yet driven us into that desperate measure, or

induced

induced us to excite any other nation to war against them. We have not raised armies with ambitious designs of separating from Great Britain, and establishing independent states. We fight not for glory or for conquest. We exhibit to mankind the remarkable spectacle of a people attacked by unprovoked enemies, without any imputation, or even suspicion of offence. They boast of their privileges and civilization, and yet proffer no milder conditions than servitude or death.

"In our native land, in defence of the freedom that is our birth-right, and which we ever enjoyed till the late violation of it, for the protection of our property, acquired solely by the honest industry of our fore-fathers and ourselves, against violence actually offered, we have taken up arms. We shall lay them down when hostilities shall cease on the part of the aggressors, and all danger of their being renewed shall be removed, and not before."

During these transactions, Generals Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton, with a reinforcement of troops from England, arrived at Boston; soon after which General Gage published a proclamation, declaring martial law to be in force, and offering pardon to those who would lay down their arms and submit to the king, with the exception of Samuel Adams and John Hancock.

This proclamation, like every other measure, designed

designed to intimidate or divide, served only to increase the activity of the Americans, by strengthening their conviction, that arms, and arms alone, were to be relied upon for ultimate safety.

It having been conjectured, from intelligence received respecting the movements of the British army, that General Gage intended to penetrate into the country, it was recommended by the provincial congress to the council of war to take the necessary measures for the defence of Dorchester Neck, and to occupy Bunker's Hill, a very high and commanding piece of ground just within the peninsula on which Charlestown stands, and which had hitherto been neglected by both armies *. In observance of these instructions, a detachment of one thousand men, under the command of General Prescot, was ordered to take possession of this ground; but by some mistake, Breed's Hill, situated on the further part of the peninsula, next to Boston, was marked out instead of Bunker's Hill, for the intrenchments proposed to be thrown up.

The party sent on this service proceeded to Breed's Hill, and worked with so much diligence and secrecy, that, by the dawn of day, they had thrown up a small square redoubt, about forty

* Charlestown is separated from Boston only by a narrow sheet of water, over which a bridge has since been thrown.

yards on each side, without having given the least alarm to some ships of war which were stationed in the river, at no great distance from them. As soon as light had discovered this new work to the enemy, a heavy cannonade was commenced upon it, which the provincials bore with firmness. They continued their labour till they had thrown up a small breast-work stretching from the east side of the redoubt to the bottom of the hill, so as very considerably to extend their line of defence.

As this eminence overlooked Boston, General Gage thought it necessary to drive the provincials from it. To effect this object, he detached Major-General Howe, and Brigadier-General Pigot, at the head of ten companies of grenadiers, and the same number of light infantry, with a proper proportion of field artillery. These troops landed at Moreton's Point, where they immediately formed; but, perceiving the Americans to wait for them with firmness, they remained on the ground till the success of the enterprise should be rendered secure by the arrival of a reinforcement from Boston, for which General Howe had applied. During this interval, the Americans also were reinforced by a body of their countrymen, led by Generals Warren and Pomeroy; and they availed themselves of this delay to increase their security by pulling up some adjoining post

post and rail fences, and arranging them in two parallel lines at a small distance from each other, the space between which they filled up with hay, so as to form a complete cover from the musketry of the enemy.

On being joined by their second detachment, the British troops, who were formed in two lines, advanced slowly under cover of a very heavy discharge of cannon and howitzers, frequently halting in order to allow their artillery time to demolish the works. While they were advancing, orders were given to set fire to Charlestown, a handsome village containing about five hundred houses, which flanked the line of march. The buildings were chiefly of wood, and the flames were quickly communicated so extensively, that almost the whole town was in one great blaze *.

It is not easy to conceive a more grand and a more awful spectacle than was now exhibited, nor a moment of more anxious expectation than that which was now presented. The scene of action

* To justify this severe policy, it has been alleged that the houses afforded a cover to the Americans, who lined the Bank of the British columns advancing against Breed's Hill; but the truth of this assertion is denied by all the provincial accounts, which allege, with great probability, that the troops were withdrawn from the town under an apprehension that the enemy, after passing it, might suddenly turn upon them, and cut off their retreat.

was in full view of the heights of Boston, and of its neighbourhood, which were covered with spectators, taking deep and opposite interests in the events passing before them. The soldiers of the two hostile armies not on duty, the citizens of Boston, and the inhabitants of the adjacent country, all feeling emotions which set description at defiance, were witnesses of the majestic and tremendous scene.

The provincials permitted the enemy to approach unmolested within less than one hundred yards of their works, when they poured in upon them so deadly a fire of small arms, that the British line was totally broken, and fell back with precipitation towards the landing place. By the very great exertions of their officers they were rallied, and brought up to the charge; but were again driven back in confusion by the heavy and incessant fire from the works. General Howe is said to have been left at one time almost alone, and it is certain that very few officers about his person escaped unhurt.

The impression to be made by victory or defeat in this early stage of the war, was deemed of the utmost consequence, and therefore very extraordinary exertions were made once more to rally the English. With great difficulty they were a third time led up to the works. The redoubt was now attacked on three sides at once, while some pieces

pieces of artillery, which had been brought to bear on the breast-work, raked it from end to end. The cross fire too from the ships and floating batteries not only annoyed the works on Breed's Hill, but deterred any considerable reinforcements from passing into the peninsula, and coming to their assistance. The ammunition of the Americans was now so nearly exhausted, that they were no longer able to keep up the same incessant stream of fire which had twice repulsed the enemy; and, on his third attempt, the redoubt, the walls of which the English mounted with ease, was carried at the point of the bayonet. Yet the Americans, many of whom were without bayonets, are said to have maintained the contest with clubbed muskets till the redoubt was half filled with the king's troops.

The redoubt being lost, the breast-work, which had been defended with equal courage and obstinacy, was necessarily abandoned, and the very hazardous operation undertaken, of retreating, in the face of a victorious enemy, over Charlestown Neck; where they were exposed to the same cross fire from the Glasgow man of war, and two floating batteries, which had deterred the reinforcements ordered to their aid from coming to their assistance, and had probably prevented their receiving proper supplies of ammunition.

In this enterprise about three thousand men, composing the flower of the British army, were

engaged, and high encomiums were bestowed on the resolution they manifested. Their killed and wounded amounted, according to the returns of General Gage, to one thousand and fifty-four, an immense proportion of the number engaged in the action. Notwithstanding the danger of their retreat over Charlestown Neck, the loss of the Americans was stated at only four hundred and fifty men, including the killed, wounded, and missing; among the former was Doctor Warren, a gentleman greatly beloved and regretted, who fell just after the provincials began their retreat from the breast-work.

The colonial force engaged in this action was stated through the country at fifteen hundred; by some it has been supposed to have amounted to four thousand.

Although the ground was lost, the Americans claimed the victory. Their confidence in themselves was greatly increased; and it was universally asked, how many more such triumphs the British army could afford?

The enemy had been treated too roughly in the action to attempt further offensive operations, and they contented themselves with seizing and fortifying Bunker's Hill, which secured to them the peninsula of Charlestown, in which, however, they remained as closely blockaded as in that of Boston.

The Americans were greatly elated by the intrepidity

trepidity their raw troops had displayed, and the execution which had been done by them in this engagement. Their opinion of the superiority of veterans over men untrained to the duties of a soldier, sustained no inconsiderable diminution, and they fondly cherished the belief, that courage and dexterity in the use of fire-arms would bestow advantages amply compensating the want of discipline. Unfortunately for their country, this course of thinking was not confined to the soldiers. It seems to have extended to those who guided the public councils, and to have contributed to the adoption of a system, which more than once brought the cause for which they had taken up arms to the brink of ruin. They did not distinguish sufficiently between the momentary efforts of a few brave men, brought together by a high sense of the injuries with which their country was threatened, and carried into action while under the influence of keen resentments, and continued suffering, and those steady persevering exertions, which must be necessary to bring so serious and so important a contest to a happy termination. Nor did they examine with sufficient accuracy, nor allow sufficient influence, to several striking circumstances attending the battle which had been fought. It is not easy to read the accounts given of that action without being persuaded, that had the Americans on Breed's Hill been supplied with

ammunition and properly supported, had the reinforcements ordered to their assistance actually entered the peninsula, as soldiers in habits of obedience would have done, and displayed the same heroic courage which was exhibited by their countrymen engaged in defence of the works; the assailants must have been defeated, and the flower of the British army cut to pieces. It ought also to have been remarked, that, while the many were prevented by the danger which presented itself to them from executing the orders they had received, only the few, who were endowed with more than a usual portion of bravery, encountered that danger, and that it is not by the few, great victories are to be obtained, or a country to be saved.

Amidst these preparations for war, the voice of peace was yet heard. Allegiance to the king was still acknowledged, and a lingering hope remained that an accommodation was not impossible. The petition voted to his majesty was full of professions of duty and attachment; and a letter to the people of England, in which they are conjured, by the endearing appellations of friends, countrymen, and brethren, to prevent the dissolution of "that connexion, which the remembrance of former friendships, pride in the glorious achievements of common ancestors, and affection for the heirs of their virtues, had heretofore maintained." In all their addresses they disclaimed the idea of

 indepen-

independence, and professed themselves to consider a union with England, on constitutional principles, as the greatest blessing which could be bestowed on them.

But Britain had determined to maintain, by force, the legislative supremacy of Parliament; and America had determined, by force, to repel the claim.

CHAPTER IV.

Colonel Washington appointed Commander in Chief of the American Forces—Arrives at Cambridge—Strength and Disposition of the two Armies—Deficiency of the Americans in Arms and Ammunition—Falmouth burned—Success of the American Cruizers—Distress of the British from the Want of Fresh Provisions—Difficulty of re-enlisting the Army—Plans for attacking Boston—Possession taken of the Heights of Dorchester—Boston evacuated.

FROM the period of his marriage, the attentions of Colonel Washington, who had retired to Mount Vernon, were for several years principally directed to the management of his estate, which had now become considerable, and which he greatly improved. He continued, however, a most respected member of the legislature of his country, in which he took an early and a decided part in the opposition made to the principle of taxation asserted by the British Parliament. He was chosen by the independent companies formed through the northern parts of Virginia, to command them; and was elected a member of the first Congress that met at Philadelphia, in which body he was very soon distinguished as the soldier of America. He was placed on all those committees whose duty it was to make

arrangements for defence; and when it became necessary to appoint a commander in chief, his military character, the solidity of his judgment, the steady firmness of his temper, the dignity of his person and deportment, the confidence inspired by his patriotism and integrity, and the independence of his circumstances, combined with that policy which actuated New England, and induced a wish to engage the southern colonies cordially in a war, to designate him in the opinion of all as the person to whom the destinies of his country should be confided.

He was unanimously chosen "General and Commander in Chief of the army of the United Colonies, and all the forces now raised or to be raised by them *."

When, the next day, the President communicated this appointment to him, he modestly answered, that though truly sensible of the high honour done him, yet he felt great distress, from a consciousness that his abilities and military experience might not be equal to the extensive and important

* Artemus Ward, of Massachussetts, who had commanded the troops before Boston; Colonel Lee, a British officer, who had distinguished himself in Portugal, but had resigned his commission in the service of the King; Philip Schuyler, of New York; and Israel Putnam, of Connecticut, now also before Boston; were appointed to the rank of major-generals; and Mr. Horatio Gates, who had held the rank of a major in the British service, was appointed adjutant-general.

trust.

trust. However, as the Congress desired it, he would enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power he possessed in their service, and for support of the glorious cause. He begged them to accept his cordial thanks for this distinguished testimony of their approbation, and then added, "But lest some unlucky event should happen unfavourable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room, that I this day declare, with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honoured with."

He declined all compensation for his services, and avowed an intention to keep an exact account of his expenses, which he should rely on Congress to discharge.

A special commission was made out for him *, and a solemn resolution was unanimously entered into,

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* "The delegates of the United Colonies of New Hampshire, Massachussetts' Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the counties of Newcastle, Kent, and Sussex on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina;

"*To George Washington, Esq.*

"We, reposing special trust and confidence in your patriotism, valour, conduct, and fidelity, do, by these presents, constitute and appoint you to be General and Commander in Chief of the army of the United Colonies, and of all the forces now raised, or

into, declaring, that Congress would maintain, assist, and adhere to him as the General and Commander in Chief of the forces raised, or to be raised, for the maintenance and preservation of American liberty, with their lives and fortunes.

He prepared, without delay, to enter upon the arduous duties of his station; and having passed a few days in New York, where General Schuyler commanded, and where several very important arrangements were to be made, he proceeded with the utmost dispatch to Cambridge, which was the head quarters of the American army.

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or to be raised by them, and of all others who shall voluntarily offer their service, and join the said army for the defence of American liberty, and for repelling every hostile invasion thereof. And you are hereby invested with full power and authority to act as you shall think for the good and welfare of the service.

"And we do hereby strictly charge and require all officers and soldiers under your command, to be obedient to your orders, and diligent in the exercise of their several duties.

"And we also enjoin and require you to be careful in executing the great trust reposed in you, by causing strict discipline and order to be observed in the army, and that the soldiers be duly exercised and provided with all convenient necessaries.

"And you are to regulate your conduct in every respect by the rules and discipline of war, (as herewith given you,) and punctually to observe and follow such orders and directions from time to time as you shall receive from this or a future Congress of these United Colonies, or Committee of Congress.

"This commission to continue in force until revoked by this or a future Congress."

As

As all orders of men concurred in approving his appointment, all concurred in expressing the satisfaction that event had given them, and their determination to afford him the most entire support; yet the address from the provincial Congress of New York seemed to disclose some jealousy, even at that time, entertained of the danger* to which liberty was exposed from a military force; and the very expression of their confidence, that he would return, when peace should be restored, to the walks of private life, betrayed their fears, that so much power once acquired might not readily be parted with.

Massachussetts manifested more than usual solicitude to demonstrate the respect entertained for their General. A committee of the Congress of that province waited to receive him at Springfield, on the confines of the colony, about one hundred miles from Boston, and to escort him to the army. Immediately after his arrival, an address was presented to him from the representatives, breathing for him the most cordial affection, and testifying

* After expressing their joy at his appointment, the address proceeds to say, "We have the fullest assurances, that whenever this important contest shall be decided by that fondest wish of every American soul, an accommodation with our mother country, you will chearfully resign the important deposit committed into your hands, and re-assume the character of our worthiest citizen."

for

for him the most exalted respect. His answer * was well calculated to keep up the favourable impressions which had been made, the preservation of which was so essential to the success of that very arduous contest into which the United Colonies had now entered.

The first moments after his arrival in camp were employed by the Commander in Chief in reconnoitring the enemy, and examining the strength and situation of the American troops.

The main body of the British army, under the immediate command of General Howe, was entrenching itself strongly on Bunker's Hill, about a mile from Charlestown, and about half a mile in advance of the works which had been thrown up by the Americans on Breed's Hill. Three floating

* The answer given by General Washington to this warm and flattering address commenced in the following terms:

"Gentlemen,

"Your kind congratulations on my appointment and arrival demand my warmest acknowledgments, and will be ever retained in grateful remembrance. In exchanging the enjoyments of domestic life for the duties of my present honourable but arduous station, I only emulate the virtue and public spirit of the whole province of Massachussetts, which, with a firmness and patriotism without example, has sacrificed all the comforts of social and political life, in support of the rights of mankind, and the welfare of our common country. My highest ambition is to be the happy instrument of vindicating these rights, and to see this devoted province again restored to peace, liberty, and safety."

batteries

batteries lay in Mystic River, near the camp; and a twenty gun ship below the ferry between Boston and Charlestown. There was also on the Boston side of the water, on Cops, or Cope's Hill, a strong battery, which had very much annoyed the provincials while in possession of Breed's Hill, and which now served to cover and strengthen the post held by the enemy on Bunker's Hill. The other division of the British army was deeply intrenched, and strongly fortified on Roxbury Neck. These two divisions secured the only avenues leading from the country into the two peninsulas of Boston and Charlestown; and with the facilities given by the entire command of the waters, could very readily communicate with and support each other. They constituted the whole force of the enemy, except the light horse, and an inconsiderable body of infantry stationed in Boston.

The American army lay on both sides of Charles River. Its right occupied the high grounds about Roxbury, from whence it extended towards Dorchester, and its left was covered by Mystic or Medford River, a space of at least twelve miles.

Intrenchments were thrown up on Winter and Prospect Hills, something more than a mile from that division of the enemy which lay on the peninsula of Charlestown, and in full view of it. A strong intrenchment was also thrown up at Sewal's farm; in addition to which, such intermediate

points

points on the river as would admit of the landing of troops, were occupied and strengthened. At Roxbury, where General Thomas commanded, a strong work had been erected on the hill, about two hundred yards from the meeting house, which, aided by the difficulties of the ground, was relied on to secure that pass.

The troops from New Hampshire, with a regiment from Rhode Island, amounting in the whole to somewhat less than two thousand men, occupied Winter Hill. About a thousand men, commanded by General Putnam, being a part of the Connecticut line, were on Prospect Hill; the residence of the Connecticut troops, and nine regiments from Massachussetts, making in the whole between four and five thousand men, were stationed at Roxbury. The remaining troops of Rhode Island were placed at Sewal's farm, and the residue of the forces of Massachussetts at Cambridge, except about seven hundred men, who were dispersed along the coast in several small towns, to prevent the casual depradations of the enemy.

Thus the American lines were extended over a very considerable space, nor could they be contracted without opening to the enemy a communication with the country. The commander in chief made no other immediate change in the disposition of the troops, than to arrange and organize them more distinctly. For this purpose the

army was thrown into three grand divisions. That part of it which lay about Roxbury, constituted the right wing, which was now commanded by Major General Ward: those troops about Mystic, or Medford River, formed the left; which was placed under the command of Major General Lee, who was himself stationed on Prospect Hill: the centre division, including the reserve, was under the immediate command of General Washington, whose head quarters were at Cambridge.

The General found himself at the head of about fourteen thousand five hundred men, with whom he had to defend this extensive camp, and to continue the blockade of the enemy on the land side. This force was by no means so considerable as the common opinion made it, and a variety of circumstances combined to render it still less efficient, than from its numbers alone might have been expected.

So long had the hope of avoiding open hostilities been indulged, that the time for making preparations to meet them had passed away unemployed, and the neglect could not be remedied. No adequate supplies of military stores had been procured, and there was really but a very inconsiderable quantity of them in the country. On General Washington's first arrival in camp, he had ordered a return of the ammunition to be made, and the report stated three hundred and three barrels of powder to be in the stores. A few days after this return, on directing a fresh supply to the troops, the

the alarming discovery was made, that there were in reality on hand only nine thousand nine hundred and forty pounds, not more than sufficient to furnish each man with nine cartridges. This mistake in the quantity had been produced by a misapprehension of the committee of supplies, (for the magazines were not yet in the possession of military officers,) who, instead of returning the actual existing quantity, reported the whole which had been originally furnished by the province, thereby including in the estimate what had been already expended. The utmost possible exertions were necessary to relieve this essential want. They were made in every direction. All the colonial governments and committees, as well as Congress, were applied to, and intreated to send every pound of powder and lead which could be spared. "No quantity, however small," they were assured, "was beneath notice." In the mean time every saving was practised, and every effort was used to bring these essential articles into the country. This critical state of things continued for about a fortnight, when the danger resulting from it was in some degree diminished by the arrival of a small supply of powder sent from Elizabeth Town in New Jersey. The difficulties to be encountered by those who then conducted the affairs of America, may be, in some degree, conjectured from a circumstance attending this transaction. All essen-

tial to the general safety as it apparently was, to replenish with the utmost possible expedition, the magazines of that army, which was encamped in the face of the enemy, the committee of Elizabeth Town were under the necessity of transmitting privately, under other pretexts, this necessary aid, lest the people of the neighbourhood should seize and retain it for their own security.

The utmost address was used to conceal from the enemy the alarming deficiency which has been stated; but when it is recollected in how many various directions, and to what various authorities application for assistance was unavoidably made, it will appear scarcely possible that these efforts at secrecy could have been completely successful. It is more probable that the communications which must have been made to the British General, were not credited; and that he could not persuade himself to believe, that a body of troops, circumstanced as was the American army in other respects, would be hardy enough to maintain the position they occupied, if destitute of ammunition. He knew well that the want of powder must be rendered still more fatal to them by other wants which could not be relieved. That of bayonets was peculiarly distressing. Their deficiency in this article was very considerable, and was of public notoriety.

The people of New England were incomparably better

better armed than those of any other part of the continent; but even among them this important weapon was very far from being common, and the government had not yet even attempted to lay up magazines of arms to be delivered to their soldiers. The army was also in such need of tents, as to be unavoidably lodged in barracks, instead of encamping in the open field, a circumstance extremely unfavourable to any sudden collection of its force, and not less unfavourable to health and discipline.

As the troops had been raised, not by Congress, but by the colonial governments, each of which had a different establishment, no uniformity existed among the regiments. In Massachussetts the men had chosen their officers, and felt no inferiority to them. Animated with the spirit of liberty, and collected for its defence, they were not immediately sensible of the importance of discipline, nor could they, in an instant, be subjected to its rules. The army was consequently found in a state of almost entire disorganization; and the difficulty of establishing the necessary principles of order and subordination, always considerable among raw troops, was greatly increased by the short terms for which enlistments had been made. The time of service of many was to expire in November, and none were engaged to continue longer than the last of December. The early orders issued by the General, evidence a loose and unmili-

tary state of things, even surpassing what might reasonably be inferred from the circumstances under which the war was commenced.

An additional inconvenience, derived from the manner in which the army had been brought together, and the mingling of congressional and colonial authorities, was thus stated by General Washington in a letter addressed to Congress: "I should be extremely deficient in gratitude as well as justice, if I did not take the first opportunity to acknowledge the readiness and attention which the Congress and different committees have shewn to make every thing as convenient and agreeable as possible: but there is a vital and inherent principle of delay, incompatible with military service, in transacting business through such various and different channels *. I esteem it my duty therefore to represent the inconvenience that must unavoidably ensue, from a dependence on a number of persons for supplies, and submit it to the consideration of Congress, whether the public service will not be best promoted by appointing a Commissary-General for the purpose †."

* The General was under the necessity of carrying on a direct correspondence, not only with the several colonial governments, but with the committees of all the important towns, and some inferior places.

† Is it not strange that an army should have been formed without such an officer?

To the many other wants of the army, was added that of clothes, a supply of which had been rendered much more difficult than it would otherwise have been by the non-importation agreement which had preceded the commencement of hostilities.

Their operations were greatly affected too, by the total want of engineers; in addition to which, they were very insufficiently furnished with working tools.

To increase the derangements, already so considerable, the appointment of general officers made by Congress, gave great dissatisfaction, and determined several of those who thought themselves injured, to retire from the service.

These disadvantages deducted essentially from the efficiency of the American force; but under all of them, the General observed with pleasure, "the materials for a good army." There were "a great number of men, able bodied, active, zealous in the cause, and of unquestionable courage." Possessed of these materials, he employed himself incessantly and indefatigably in so organizing, as to render them serviceable. The army was arranged in divisions and brigades; even this regulation had not yet been made; and Congress was urged to the appointment of a Pay-Master, Quarter-Master General, and such other general staff as are indispensable in the structure of a regular military establishment, but had yet been omitted.

About this time General Gage received a small reinforcement from New York, after which his whole number, including the American loyalists, was computed at something less than eight thousand men.

The facility with which this force could be drawn together, so as to act against any one point of the very extended lines occupied by the Americans, probably rendered it competent to an attack on them. But it is also probable that the enemy were entirely deceived with respect to the number and condition of the provincial troops; and the severe reception given them at Breed's Hill, had inspired some respect for the courage of their opponents, and a consequent degree of caution in attacking their lines.

General Washington was sensible of the difficulties of his situation, and on first joining the army, called a council of war to deliberate on it. In this council it was unanimously determined to maintain their present position. The effect which a change of it would have had on both armies, and on public opinion; the destruction of a considerable and valuable extent of country, which, by removing, would have been exposed to the enemy; and the difficulty of finding a stronger position, were the motives for this determination. But it was resolved in the same council, not to take possession of Dorchester Point, nor to oppose

any attempt of the enemy to occupy that ground. It was, however, thought essential, in order to avoid the absolute dissolution of the present undisciplined army, in the event of their being forced from their lines by the enemy, to appoint a place of general rendezvous; and the Welsh mountains near Cambridge, and the rear of the line at Roxbury, were fixed on. In the mean time great vigilance was used in watching the enemy. All the whale boats, for several miles along the coast, were collected, and employed in keeping a look out by night on the water; and express horses were kept in perpetual readiness at the different stations for the purpose of communicating the most prompt intelligence of any movement which might be discovered.

The two armies continued to work on their fortifications without seriously molesting each other. Slight skirmishes occasionally happened, in which very little execution was done; and although the Americans made some advances towards the enemy, no attempt was made to dislodge them.

This state of apparent inactivity was ill suited to the enterprising temper of the Commander in Chief, and was very reluctantly submitted to. The situation of America appeared to him to require great efforts to destroy totally the army now in Boston, before it should be strengthened by the reinforcements which might be expected in the ensuing spring.

spring. Such an event, he persuaded himself, would decide the contest. It would give to the British nation and minister such evidence of the vigour and determination of the colonies, as would induce them to desist from the further prosecution of the war, while it would encourage and unite all America in the common cause. If, on the other hand, this measure should not be adopted, the affairs of the united colonies appeared to him to wear a very serious aspect. A very powerful armament would certainly arrive in the spring, and the duration of the war could not be calculated. He perceived with pain the immense expenses unavoidably incurred, the amount of which could not be diminished; and seeing no solid revenues to support them, he was extremely apprehensive that the finances of his country must sink under such a burden. He reflected too, that his present army must soon dissolve, and he could not look with unconcern at the very critical situation in which that event would place him.

Under these impressions, he thought much ought to be risked to obtain so desirable an object as the destruction of the army now in Boston; and with this view, he frequently reconnoitred the situation of the enemy, and was assiduous in collecting every information respecting their strength. The result of his observations and enquiries seems to have been a strong inclination to the opinion, that

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to carry the works of the enemy by storm, though very hazardous, was not absolutely impracticable. He therefore determined to call the attention of his general officers to this subject, and having previously communicated to them in a letter the points he wished them to consider, they were assembled in council for the purpose of deciding on the meditated attack. They were unanimously of opinion, that, "for the present, at least, the attempt should not be made." This resolution having been formed, the original plan of keeping up the blockade, and strengthening the camp, was persevered in.

In the mean time the distress of the British army, for fresh meat and vegetables, became very considerable. They could not receive these articles in the ordinary mode from the country; and they could not spare such a number of troops for distant excursions, as might safely penetrate far enough to obtain adequate supplies. Some small parties sailed from Boston, probably with this object; but they met, wherever they appeared, with such opposition from the militia and minute men, as to be obliged to return to their ships, frequently without having obtained such ample supplies as their situation required. To guard against these plundering parties, required a degree of exertion and activity on the part of the inhabitants of the sea coast, which they soon found extremely harrassing; and the

the governors of the different colonies were urgent that detachments from the main army should be ordered to protect them from these predatory incursions. Although it was impossible to spare the troops demanded; yet the refusal to comply with these requests occasioned no inconsiderable degree of irritation. So difficult is it for those who view only a part of a system to judge rightly of the whole; and so certain is it that the great plans formed for the general safety must be deranged, if partial interferences be permitted. These demands of particular protection were so importunate, and the unavoidable refusal to comply with them was so ill received, that it was deemed necessary by Congress, to pass a resolution, declaring that the army before Boston was designed only to oppose the enemy at that place, and ought not to be weakened by detachments for the security of other parts of the country. At Newport, in Rhode Island, the committee sought to secure the town by entering into a compromise with Captain Wallace, who commanded the ships of war on that station, in which it was stipulated that he should be furnished with provisions, on condition of his sparing the town, and committing no depredations on the country. This compromise, while it secured those who had entered into it, interfered with the general plan of distressing the enemy, by withholding from them all supplies of provisions,

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and set an example which it was feared would be followed to a most pernicious extent.

Although afterwards the assembly of Rhode Island, in imitation of the other colonies, passed an act for inflicting capital punishment on those who should be convicted of holding any traiterous correspondence with the ministry of Great Britain, or any of their agents; or of supplying the English army or navy with provisions or other necessaries; yet they excepted from the operation of this act, those who should furnish supplies of provisions to Captain Wallace, under his agreement with the town council of Newport. General Washington at length deemed it necessary to interfere, and to represent in a letter addressed to the governor of that province, the mischief to be apprehended from so dangerous a practice.

While the blockade of Boston was thus perseveringly maintained, and every effort used to distress the enemy in that place, the transactions on other parts of the continent were calculated to attract the utmost attention.

In July, Georgia had entered into the opposition made to the claims of the British Parliament to tax America, and had chosen delegates to represent that province in Congress; after which, the style of the Thirteen United Colonies was assumed, and by that title the English provinces, confederated, and in arms, were thenceforward designated.

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After a very short recess of one month, Congress again assembled at Philadelphia. They immediately took under their consideration the state of the colonies, and letters of the commander in chief. The scarcity of arms and ammunition continued to be an alarming difficulty, which cramped all their military movements, and which their utmost efforts had been unable to remove. They not only applied large sums towards obtaining these articles on continental account, but recommended it to the state conventions, to use all the means in their power to effect the same object. These exertions were not entirely unsuccessful. They had the address to purchase all the powder on the coast of Africa, even within the British forts, without attracting notice; and they seized the magazine in the island of Bermudas, the inhabitants of which were well disposed to favour the attempt, and were restrained only by their inability to act efficiently, and by the insecurity of their situation, from making one common cause with the continental colonies. They also made great exertions towards the internal manufacture of gunpowder, and the obtaining within themselves, saltpetre and sulphur, the principal materials in the composition of that all-important article. All these measures, however, could not afford adequate supplies, and the danger resulting from the want of an article so vitally essential in war, still continued to be very great.

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The importance of a maritime force to the military operations, of a country possessing an immense extent of sea coast, must always be felt very sensibly; and the particular attention of the united colonies was, in a very early period of the contest, directed more immediately to this interesting object, by an event not very unusual in the period of hostilities, but which, at the time, excited no small degree of resentment.

Orders had been issued in his Majesty's name to the commanders of his ships of war, to proceed, as in the case of actual rebellion, against their sea port towns and places, which were accessible to the king's ships, and in which any troops should be raised or military works erected.

The town of Falmouth, a flourishing village on the sea side of Massachussetts, having given some particular offence, its destruction was determined on, and, under colour of these orders, a small naval force commanded by Captain Mowat, was detached for that purpose. On his arrival, about three o'clock in the evening of the 17th, he gave notice that he was directed to burn every sea port town between Boston and Halifax; and that, as a favour to Falmouth, he had obtained permission to suspend the execution of his orders till the next morning, provided they would send him eight of their small arms. This proposition was acceded to, and the next day the committee of the place waited

waited on him to endeavour to save the town. He offered to wait for further orders from his Admiral, provided they would deliver up all their arms of every sort, with all their ammunition, and four of their citizens, as hostages.

This extraordinary demand not being complied with, a furious cannonade and bombardment was commenced, by which the town was reduced to ashes. An attempt was then made to penetrate into the country, but the militia and minute men, rather irritated than intimidated by this wanton act of unavailing devastation, drove the party which had landed back to their ships, with loss.

This measure was very strongly reprobated throughout America, and was a mean of stimulating the attention of the united colonies to their marine, and hastening their preparations for retaliating injuries sustained at sea, as far as might be in their power. It was one immediate motive with the convention of Massachussetts, for granting letters of marque and reprisal, and was assigned by Congress, in addition to the capture of American merchantmen on the high seas, as an inducement for fitting out some ships of war, to man which they directed two battalions of marines to be recruited, and articles of war were framed for the government of their little navy.

Though general letters of reprisal were not immediately granted by Congress to their continental

nental cruisers, a measure of equal efficacy, but less hostile in appearance, was adopted. Their ships of war were authorized to capture all vessels employed in giving assistance to the enemy in any manner whatever; and no capture could be made which might not be construed to come within the terms used in their resolution. At the repeated and pressing instances of the Commander in Chief, they also established courts to take cognizance of prizes, and adopted for their government the general principles of national law. A few small cruisers had been already fitted out under the authority, and by the directions of General Washington, and the coast soon swarmed with the privateers of New England. These naval exertions were attended with the most valuable consequences. Many captures were made, and very important supplies of ammunition, without which it would have been scarcely possible to have maintained the blockade of Boston, were thus obtained. The cruisers of Massachussetts were particularly successful; and the enemy, who seem to have been under no apprehension of an attack on what was deemed their peculiar element, smarted very severely under these first essays of the colonists in maritime war.

Captain Manly, of the Lee privateer, was remarkably active and fortunate. He made many very valuable captures of vessels laden with mi-

litary stores; the most important and acceptable of which, was a large ordnance ship, having on board a very considerable cargo of arms and ammunition, with a complete assortment of such working tools, utensils, and machines, as were most needed in the American camp.

In addition to those prizes which contributed to relieve the most urgent wants of the provincial army, several were made which very much increased the distress of the British troops. The extreme difficulty and uncertainty of obtaining adequate supplies of fresh provisions, vegetables, and fuel, in America, had determined the English government to furnish their army in Boston with those necessary articles from Europe. After they had been purchased and shipped at a very enormous price, the vessels containing them were so long tossed about by contrary winds, that a great proportion of the live stock perished, most of the vegetables were destroyed by fermentation, and when the scattered fleet, laden with what remained of this cargo, reached the American coast, very many of the ships were taken by the continental and provincial cruisers. The miscarriages of supplies, which were so much needed in Boston, essentially affected the army in that place *.

The distress produced in the West Indies by the

* Belsham.

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unexpected prohibition to export provisions from the United Colonies, occasioned an application from the island of Bermudas, representing their favourable dispositions towards the American cause; and their present sufferings, in consequence of the entire cessation of all intercourse between them. On considering this memorial, it was determined that a sufficient quantity of provisions for the support of that island might be exported to it, to be paid for not only in arms, ammunition, saltpetre, or sulphur, but likewise in salt, an article abounding in Bermudas; and the want of which began to be very severely felt in North America. The quantity of provisions to be exported was apportioned among the middle and southern states, including New York; and the respective conventions or committees of safety were requested to license and superintend the loading of vessels engaged in this commerce.

Although the British army had as yet manifested no intention to evacuate Boston, fears were continually entertained concerning the colony of New York. Mr. Tryon, who was very popular in that province, and who had been some time before removed from it to the government of North Carolina, had been lately recalled and appointed Governor of New York, where his utmost influence and address were employed in detaching the colony from the union. His exertions were se-

conded* by the Asia man of war, whose guns commanded the town, and excited the fears of the citizens for the safety of their persons and property. The consequence of these intrigues and of this terror was, that even in the convention, disaffection to the American cause began openly to shew itself; and the avowal of a determination to join the king's standard is said to have been made with impunity. Justly alarmed at these threatening appearances, which were rendered the more serious by some confidential communications from England, stating the intention of the administration to be to possess themselves immediately of the Hudson, and to occupy both New York and Albany; an effort was made in Congress to obtain a resolution for removing what was believed the primary cause, by seizing the Governor; but he had been artful enough so to conduct himself, as to make impressions in his favour on several of the popular leaders; and he was defended by a part of the delegation from New York, with so much earnestness, that the advocates of the proposition forbore for a time to press it; and when,

* Governor Tryon derived no inconsiderable degree of aid from the press of Mr. Rivington, which was now devoted to the royal cause. Its influence was believed to be so pernicious, that Captain Sear, at the head of a body of horsemen from Connecticut, armed with muskets, entered the town, broke up his press, and carried off his type.

afterwards,

afterwards, the increasing defection in that province induced them to resume the subject, the resolution was expressed in general terms, and assumed the form of a recommendation to them who exercised the legislative and executive authorities in the several provinces, "To arrest and secure every person in their respective colonies, whose going at large might, in their opinion, endanger the safety of the colony, or the liberties of America."

Intelligence of this resolution is supposed to have been received by the Governor, who, after some correspondence with the Mayor of the city respecting his personal safety, retired for security on board the Halifax packet; from whence he continued to carry on his intrigues with nearly as much advantage as while on shore.

This temper manifested by New York excited serious fears respecting the highlands on the Hudson, a post of so much importance, as to have engaged the attention of the convention, who applied to Congress on that subject, and transmitted a plan of the works proposed to be there erected for the defence of the river. Congress warmly recommended a prosecution of this plan, and determined on establishing a continental post in the highlands; for the garrisoning of which, measures were immediately taken. Two regiments were directed to be raised by New Jersey, on continental establishment, to serve for one year; and a

detachment from these troops was ordered to the Hudson. Those not ordered to the highlands, were directed to approach New York, probably for the purpose of giving confidence to their friends in that place.

But the subject which, next to the supply of arms and ammunition, most interested the American government, was the re-enlistment of the army before Boston.

The early attention of Congress to this essential object had been most earnestly solicited by General Washington; and, on the 29th of September, a committee had been appointed, with directions to repair to the camp at Cambridge; there to consult with the Commander in Chief, and with the chief magistrates of New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, and the council of Massachussetts, "on the most effectual method of continuing, supporting, and regulating a continental army." On the return of this committee, it was determined, that the new army intended to lie before Boston, should consist of twenty thousand three hundred and seventy-two men, including officers, to be raised as far as practicable from the troops already in service at that place. Unfortunately, in constituting this first military establishment of the union, an essential, possibly an inevitable error was committed; the consequences of which were ever afterwards very severely

verely felt. The enlistments, instead of being for the war, were only for the term of one year, if not sooner discharged by Congress. It is not easy entirely to account for this fatal error. Some jealousy of a permanent army was probably intermingled with the hope, that the war would not be of long duration; and with the fear, that much difficulty would be experienced in prevailing on men to enter into engagements of unlimited extent. Perhaps the habits of the northern colonies, where it had been usual to raise men for a single campaign, may have contributed to this measure. And it very probably might have been supposed, that, as hostilities made greater progress, the public resentments would increase, the people would be more united, and the ranks would be filled with more facility. Whatever motives led to its adoption, its consequences were of the most serious nature; and no one part of the American system brought their ultimate success into such real hazard.

Accompanying the resolution for raising and establishing the new army, were others, some of which serve to exhibit the perilous condition of the country, and how unprepared it was for the arduous conflict in which it was engaged.

The soldiers had brought with them into service their own arms, a practice at all times inconvenient, as they will be of different caliber; yet

it was deemed necessary to retain at a valuation for the new army those belonging to men who would not re-enlist. The government being entirely unprovided with blankets, two dollars were offered to every person who would bring with him an article so necessary in a winter campaign; and as no regimentals had been procured for the troops, various coloured clothes were purchased, to be delivered to them, and the price deducted from their pay. But no regulation was more extraordinary, or evinced more strongly the public necessity, than that which required the soldiers to find their own arms, or to pay six shillings for the use of arms furnished by the Congress for the campaign.

So soon as the arrangements had been made by the committee, and before they had been confirmed by the approbation of Congress, General Washington proceeded to take the preparatory steps towards carrying them into operation. In his general orders, he required that all officers, who intended to decline the further service of their country, and to retire from the army at the expiration of the terms for which they were at present engaged, should signify their intentions in writing to their respective colonels, to be communicated to the General by the officers commanding brigades. "Those brave men and true patriots, who resolved to continue to serve and

defend

defend their brethren, privileges, and property," were also requested to signify their intentions in the same manner, and to consider themselves engaged to the last day of December, 1776, unless sooner discharged by Congress.

But the high spirit and enthusiastic ardour which had brought such numbers into the field after the battle of Lexington, was already beginning to dissipate; and all the alacrity for the service, which had been expected, was not displayed. Many were unwilling to continue in it; and others annexed special conditions to their further engagement. Very many insisted on stipulating for leave to visit their families at the expiration of their present term of service; and others suspending all decision, neither gave in their names to retire from the army nor to continue in it.

The nature of the case not admitting delay, the General repeated his orders, with the addition, that the declaration must be explicit and not conditional. "The times," he added, "and the importance of the great cause we are engaged in, allow no room for hesitation and delay. When life, liberty, and property are at stake; when our country is in danger of being a melancholy scene of bloodshed and desolation; when our towns are laid in ashes, and innocent women and children

driven from their peaceful habitations, exposed to the rigour of an inclement season, to depend, perhaps, on the hand of charity for support; when calamities like these are staring us in the face, and a brutal, savage enemy (more so than was ever yet found in a civilized nation) are threatening us and every thing we hold dear, with destruction from foreign troops, it little becomes the character of a soldier to shrink from danger, and condition for new terms. It is the General's intention to indulge both officers and soldiers who compose the new army, with furloughs for a reasonable time; but this must be done in such a manner as not to injure the service, or weaken the army too much at once." In this state of things, several officers, supposing that commissions and rank might depend on recruiting men, began, without permission, to enlist soldiers to serve particularly under them. This practice it was necessary to stop. All further enlistments, under particular officers, were forbidden, till directions to that effect should be given. "Commissions in the army," say the orders, "are not intended for those who can raise the most men, but for such gentlemen who are most likely to deserve them. The General would not have it even supposed, nor our enemies encouraged to believe, that there is a man in this army (except a few under particular circumstances)

who

who will require to be twice asked to do what his honour, his personal liberty, the welfare of his country, and the safety of his family, so loudly demand of him. When motives powerful as these conspire to call men into service, and when that service is rewarded with higher pay than private soldiers ever yet received in any former war, the General cannot, nor will not, until convinced to the contrary, harbour so despicable an opinion of their understanding, and their zeal for the cause, as to believe they will desert it."

The troops were also assured, that clothes, on reasonable terms, were prepared "for those brave soldiers who intended to continue in the service another year."

Notwithstanding these exhortations, a disinclination to make further engagements, especially without knowing the officers by whom they were to be commanded, continued to be manifested by the privates.

At length, with much labour, the officers were arranged; immediately after which recruiting orders were issued. After stating the terms of enlistment, and promising leave of absence for a reasonable time during the winter, which, however inconvenient, was an indulgence found to be indispensable, the General directed the officers, "to be careful not to enlist any person suspected of being unfriendly to the liberties of America, or any aban-

abandoned vagabonds, to whom all causes and countries are equal, and alike indifferent. The rights of mankind and the freedom of America would have numbers sufficient to support them, without resorting to such wretched assistance. Let those who wish to put shackles upon freemen, fill their ranks with, and place their confidence in, such miscreants."

But the sufferings of the army for fuel*, clothes, and provisions, had been great; and the new regiments did not fill with that rapidity which had been expected. Finding this, one officer from each company was employed to recruit in the country; but the progress made was not such as the public exigencies demanded. The army was dissolving by the expiration of the time for which it had been enlisted, and men in sufficient num-

* Mr. Gordon thus states the dissatisfaction with the Government of Massachussetts, which was expressed on this occasion by General Lee, who attributed the sufferings of the army to their parsimony. The assembly was far from giving satisfaction to General Lee, who, about the middle of November, pronounced them "benumbed in a fixed state of torpidness, without the symptoms of animation, unless the apprehensions of rendering themselves unpopular among their particular constituents by an act of vigour for the public service, deserve the name of animation. He charged them with inconsistent and timid conduct, and ascribed it to their torpor, narrow politics, or call it what you will, that the army had been reduced to very great distress."

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ber were not yet obtained to take the places of those who, having performed stipulated duty, insisted on returning home. The impatience to revisit their friends, discovered by the soldiers entitled to a discharge, was so extreme and ungovernable, as to overcome all their solicitude for keeping the enemy in a state of blockade; and many of them could not be detained in camp even for ten days, at the end of which period was expected the arrival of a body of militia who had been ordered to supply their places; nor was it without great difficulty, and some degree of violence, that any of them were prevailed on to remain for that time. This fact, however, did not sufficiently impress on the governments of the United Colonies, that it was possible to rely too much on individual patriotism; and that the American cause, if defended entirely by temporary armies, must be often exposed to the most imminent hazard.

Perceiving the very great difficulty experienced in recruiting the army, and alarmed at a circumstance which wore so serious an aspect, the General recommended, in very earnest terms, to Congress, to try the effect of a bounty; but this proposition was not acceded to till late in January following; and on the last day of December, when all the old troops not engaged on the new establishments were disbanded, only nine thousand six hundred and fifty men had been enlisted for the army

army of 1776, many of whom were unavoidably permitted to be absent on furlough. Their numbers, however, were considerably augmented during the winter; and, in the mean time, the militia cheerfully complied with the requisitions made on them.

The difficulty of recruiting the army was greatly increased by the danger apprehended from the small-pox. Inoculation had not then been generally practised in America, and the fears entertained of the disease were excessive. It raged in Boston, and intelligence was received, that General Gage had caused several persons to be inoculated, and sent into the country for the purpose of spreading the infection. This intelligence was never confirmed, but a belief of its truth was greatly strengthened, by many cases of the disease having occurred among those who had been permitted to leave the town. This, however, might well have happened, although no means had been employed to produce the effect. The report, whether true or false, increased the caution observed in all communications with persons who had been within the lines of the enemy.

Although the close blockade of Boston, and the continued attention it was found necessary to bestow on the organization and discipline of the troops, gave no inconsiderable degree of employment to the General; and although his deficiency in

in military stores, and the very hazardous operation of renovating a disbanded army in the face of a veteran foe, rendered it at least a very bold measure to maintain the position which had been taken, and to make advances upon the enemy; yet he viewed with infinite mortification that semblance of inactivity, to which his situation still compelled him to submit. In the commencement of the contest, while the minds of many were yet undetermined, it was of vast importance to secure the public confidence, and it was necessary to pay some attention even to the public caprice. The real difficulties under which he laboured were not generally known. His numbers were greatly exaggerated, and his means for carrying on offensive operations very much magnified. The expulsion of the British army from Boston had been long since anticipated by many, and there were not wanting those who endeavoured to spread discontent, by insinuating that he was desirous of prolonging the war, in order to continue his own importance. To these symptoms of impatience and discontent, and to the consequences they might produce, he could not be entirely insensible; but it was not in his power to silence such complaints by disclosing to the world his real situation. His views still continued to be directed towards Boston; and Congress, to whom the result of the former council on this subject had been communicated, having ma-

nifested a disposition favourable towards an attempt on that place, the general officers had been again assembled, and had again advised unanimously against the measure. It seems to have been understood, that fears for the safety of the town might embarrass the measures of the army. Congress, therefore, who still inclined to favour the enterprise, came to a resolution, "that if General Washington and his council of war should be of opinion that a successful attack might be made on the troops in Boston, he should make it in any manner he might think expedient, notwithstanding the town and property in it might be thereby destroyed."

Whilst waiting for a favourable opportunity to execute this bold plan, the American General availed himself of the occasional aids received from the militia, to advance on the enemy, by taking positions which would annoy them for the present, and would favour his ulterior operations. Plowed Hill, Cobble Hill, and Lechmere's Point, were successively occupied and fortified, by which his approaches were carried within half a mile of their works on Bunker's Hill, and their floating batteries could no longer maintain the stations they had originally chosen. Floating batteries were also constructed on the part of the Americans, and would unquestionably have aided either offensive or defensive operations.

Hitherto

Hitherto the war, though carried on with the utmost activity of which the means possessed by America would admit, had for its professed object, only a redress of grievances. The language, that it was a war only against a corrupt administration, was carefully kept up, and allegiance to the British Crown was, as yet, every where avowed. The progress however of the public mind towards independence, though slow, was certain; and measures were necessarily taken apparently tending to that object. Among these was the act establishing temporary governments, in place of that revolutionary system which followed those they had suspended.

The first application on the subject was made by Massachussetts, after which, several of the colonies, being without any other than a revolutionary government, applied to Congress for advice on the system to be adopted for conducting their affairs. These applications could not fail to draw forth the sentiments of the different members on the very interesting question of separating entirely from the mother country, or endeavouring still to retain the connexion which had so long subsisted between them. Those who wished to lead the public opinion to the independence of the colonies, were of course desirous of establishing immediately, in each province, a regular government entirely competent to the administration of its affairs; whilst

those who were hostile to such an event, were opposed to any measure, which might either dispose the colonists towards it, or strengthen the opinion in Great Britain that it was the real object of those who had opposed the Legislative supremacy claimed by Parliament. It was not without much opposition that a resolution was obtained in the case of New Hampshire, which formed a precedent for others of the same nature, recommending it to the provincial convention to call a full and free representation of the people, who should establish such form of government, as, in their judgment, would best produce the general happines , and most effectually secure peace and good order in the colony during the continuance of the present dispute with Great Britain. Without this last clause, which still maintained the appearance of preserving the ancient connexion with the parent state, the recommendation would not have been made. About the same time it was also declared, that it would be extremely dangerous to the liberties and welfare of America, for any colony separately to petition the King, or either House of Parliament.

Having taken under their consideration a proclamation declaring certain persons in the colonies to have forgotten their allegiance, and to be in a state of open rebellion; and threatening with punishment those who should be found carrying on correspondence with those in rebellion, they declared

clared, "in the name of the people of these united colonies, and by authority according to the purest maxims of representation derived from them, that whatever punishment shall be inflicted upon any persons in the power of their enemies, for favouring, aiding, or abetting the cause of American liberty, shall be retaliated in the same kind, and in the same degree, upon those in their power, who have favoured, aided, or abetted, or shall favour, aid, or abet, the system of ministerial oppression." The essential difference, say they, "between our cause and that of our enemies, might justify a severer punishment; the law of retaliation will unquestionably warrant one equally severe."

The British army under General Howe, who, on the recall of General Gage, in October, had succeeded to the command of it, still remained inactive in Boston, and was still closely blocked up on the land side by the Americans. The history of this winter campaign, is a history of continuing the successive struggles on the part of the American General, under the vexations and difficulties imposed by the want of arms, ammunition, and permanent troops, on a person in an uncommon degree solicitous to prove himself, by some grand and useful achievement, worthy of the high station to which the voice of his country had called him.

The resolution relative to the attack on Boston he considered as in some degree manifesting the

wishes of Congress on that subject; and he assured the president, that an attempt would be made to put it in execution, the first moment he should perceive a probability of success. If this should not be as soon as might be expected or wished, he prayed that his situation might be attended to, and that Congress would do him the justice to believe that circumstances, not inclination on his part, occasioned the delay. "It is not," says he, "in the pages of history to furnish a case like ours. To maintain a post within musket shot of the enemy for six months together without ammunition, and at the same time to disband one army, and recruit another, within that distance, of twenty odd British regiments, is more than, probably, ever was attempted. But if we succeed as well in the latter as we have hitherto done in the former, I shall think it the most fortunate event of my whole life."

The want of ammunition was not the only alarming difficulty to be encountered. The condition of the troops in respect to arms, was almost equally critical. The soldiers composing the first army, had, generally, brought with them into the field their own fire-arms. Indifferent as these were, it was necessary to retain, at least, as many of them as were in any degree fit for use. To effect this, inspectors were appointed to examine them, and fix their value, and notice was given that

that two months' pay should be stopped from every soldier who should leave the camp without this previous examination of his arms, and without giving up such as should be deemed fit for use. The arms were either so generally useless, or, notwithstanding these precautions, were so generally carried off, that only sixteen hundred and twenty muskets were retained; and thus, this source of supply, bad as it was, did not fulfil the hopes which had been formed of it.

The recruiting officers were directed to enlist only those men who had arms; but they reported, that they must depart from these instructions, or recruit no soldiers. The neighbouring governments, as well as that of Massachussetts, were applied to without success; and persons sent with money to make purchases in the country, were not more fortunate. In the beginning of February, General Washington informed Congress, that there were then in his army near two thousand men without fire-arms of any sort, and at that time his wholeeffective rank and file, independent of militia, amounted only to eight thousand eight hundred and fifty-three. Hisincessant representations and complaints on this all interesting point, were unable to procure, for a considerable time, any supply.

Under all these disadvantages, the General still cherished the hope of being enabled, in the course of the winter, to act offensively. So early as in

the month of January, he had called a council, at which Mr. John Adams, a member of Congress, and Mr. Warren, president of the Provincial Congress of Massachussetts, assisted; in which it was resolved, "that a vigorous attempt ought to be made on the ministerial troops in Boston, before they can be reinforced in the spring, if the means can be provided, and a favourable opportunity should offer." It was further advised, "that thirteen regiments of militia should be asked for from Massachussetts and the neighbouring colonies, in order to put them in a condition to make the attempt. The militia to assemble on the first of February, and to continue, if necessary, till the first of March." In pursuance of this advice, the requisitions for militia were made, and readily complied with. The reinforcements thus obtained, amounted to between four and five thousand men, but the mildness of the season had hitherto been such, that the waters about Boston continued open. "Congress, in my last," said the General on the 19th of January, "would discover my motives for strengthening these lines with militia. But whether, as the weather turns out exceedingly mild, (insomuch as to promise nothing favourable from ice,) and there is no appearance of powder, I shall be able to attempt any thing decisive; time only can determine. No man upon earth wishes more ardently to destroy the nest in Boston than

I do:

I do; no person would be willing to go greater lengths than I shall, to accomplish it, if it shall be thought advisable; but if we have no powder to bombard with, nor ice to pass on, we shall be in no better situation than we have been in all the year; we shall be in a worse, as their works are stronger."

The fatal error of short enlistments into which both the continental and colonial governments had fallen, (had perhaps been driven by the temper and habits of the people,) had long been a subject of very deep concern to the Commander in Chief. He at length determined to beg the serious attention of Congress to it. His letter on this occasion pourtrays in part the mischief resulting from this unfortunate measure. "The disadvantages," he observed, "attending the limited enlistment of troops, are too apparent to those who are eye-witnesses of them, to render any animadversions necessary; but to gentlemen at a distance, whose attention is engrossed by a thousand important objects, the case may be otherwise.

"That this cause precipitated the fate of the brave and much to be lamented General Montgomery, and brought on the defeat which followed thereupon, I have not the most distant doubt; for had he not been apprehensive of the troops leaving him at so important a crisis, but continued the blockade of Quebec, a capitulation, from the best ac-

counts I have been able to collect, must inevitably have followed. And that we were not obliged, at one time, to dispute these lines, under disadvantageous circumstances, (proceeding from the same cause, to wit, the troops disbanding of themselves before the militia could be got in,) is to me a matter of wonder and astonishment, and proves that General Howe was either unacquainted with our situation, or restrained by his instructions from putting any thing to hazard till his reinforcements should arrive.

"The instance of General Montgomery (I mention it because it is a striking one, for a number of others might be adduced,) proves, that, instead of having meant to take advantage of circumstances, you are in a manner compelled, right or wrong, to make circumstances yield to a secondary consideration. Since the first of December I have been devising every means in my power to secure these encampments; and, though I am sensible that we never have since that period been able to act on the offensive, and at times not in a condition to defend; yet the cost of marching home one set of men, and bringing in another, the havoc and waste occasioned by the first, the repairs necessary for the second, with a thousand incidental charges and inconveniences which have arisen, and which it is scarcely possible either to recollect or describe, amount to nearly as much as the keeping

ing up of a respectable body of troops the whole time, ready for any emergency, would have done.

"To this may be added, that you never can have a well disciplined army.

"To make men well acquainted with the duties of a soldier requires time. To bring them under proper discipline and subordination, not only requires time, but is a work of great difficulty; and in this army, where there is so little distinction between officers and soldiers, requires an uncommon degree of attention. To expect then the same service from raw and undisciplined recruits, as from veteran soldiers, is to expect what never did, and perhaps never will, happen.

"Men who are familiarized to danger, approach it without thinking, whereas troops unused to service, apprehend danger where no danger exists.

"Three things prompt men to a regular discharge of their duty in time of action—natural bravery, hope of reward, and fear of punishment. The two first are common to the untutored and the disciplined soldier—but the last most obviously distinguishes one from the other. A coward taught to believe, that if he break his rank and abandon his colours he will be punished with death by his own party, will take his chance against the enemy; but the man who thinks little of the one, and is fearful of the other, acts from present feelings, regardless of consequences.

"Again,

"Again, men of a day's standing will not look forward; and from experience we find, that, as the time approaches for their discharge, they grow careless of their arms, ammunition, camp utensils, &c.; nay, even the barracks themselves have felt uncommon marks of wanton depredation, and we are laid under fresh trouble and additional expense in providing for every fresh party, at a time when we find it next to impossible to procure the articles absolutely necessary, in the first instance. To this may be added the seasoning which new recruits must have to a camp, and the loss consequent thereupon.

"But this is not all. Men engaged for a short limited time only, have the officers too much in their power. To obtain a degree of popularity, in order to induce a second enlistment, a kind of familiarity takes place, which brings on a relaxation of discipline, unlicensed furloughs, and other indulgencies, incompatible with order and good government; by which means the latter part of the time for which the soldier was engaged, is spent in undoing what it required much labour to inculcate in the first.

"To go into an enumeration of all the evils we have experienced in this late great change of the army, and the expense incidental to it, to say nothing of the hazard we have run, and must run, between the discharging of one army and the enlistment

listment of another, (unless an enormous expense of militia is incurred,) would greatly exceed the bounds of a letter. What I have already taken the liberty of saying, will serve to convey a general idea of the matter, and therefore I shall, with all due deference, take the freedom to give it as my opinion, that if Congress have any reason to believe there will be occasion for troops another year, and consequently for another enlistment, they would save money, and have infinitely better troops, if they were even at the bounty of twenty, thirty, or more dollars, to engage the men already enlisted till January next, and such others as may be wanted to complete the establishment, for and during the war. I will not undertake to say that the men may be had on these terms, but I am satisfied that it will never do to let the matter alone, as it was last year, till the time of service is near expiring. In the first place, the hazard is too great; in the next, the trouble and perplexity of disbanding one army and raising another at the same instant, and in such a critical situation as the last was, is scarcely in the power of words to describe, and such as no man, who has once experienced it, will ever undergo again."

Unfortunately, Congress did not feel so sensibly as their General, the incapacity of temporary armies to oppose those which are permanent. Nor were his officers of high rank, as yet, sufficiently impressed

impressed on this subject. In a council held previous to the new modelling of the army, they had been of opinion that the enlistments might be only for one year.

Very early in January, General Washington received unquestionable intelligence, that an armament was equipping in Boston, to sail under General Clinton, on a secret expedition. From the season of the year, he counted certainly on its being designed for some southern service; and a variety of considerations induced him to believe, that New York was its destination. He thought it of great importance to the enemy to obtain possession of the Hudson, as they would thereby open to themselves the best channel of intercourse with Canada, and would render extremely difficult all communication between the Northern and Southern Colonies. In addition to this, the royal cause had more adherents in New York, especially on Long Island, where a party of tories were said to be embodying themselves, than in any other colony; and this was believed to furnish a motive for taking possession of that country, by no means without its influence.

The same considerations which appeared to render this position so essential to the enemy, made it an object not of less consequence to the American army to maintain it. Whilst deliberating on this subject, and doubting his power, and the propriety

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of taking such a step without the previous approbation of Congress, he received a letter from General Lee, requesting to be detached, under his authority, to Connecticut, there to collect a body of volunteers, and march them to New York, to be employed both for the security of that place, and the expulsion or suppression of a banditti of tories collecting on Long Island. Though greatly inclined to the adoption of this measure, of the utility of which he felt the most positive conviction, the delicacy which it was necessary for him to observe with the civil authority, produced some suspense of his decision. Mr. John Adams, a member of Congress, and of great influence, was then at Waterton, attending the provincial convention, and with him the General determined to consult, especially respecting the idea of the extent of his powers. That gentleman, who highly approved the proposition of Lee, was decidedly of opinion, that the powers of the Commander in Chief extended to the case; and General Lee was immediately detached, with instructions to raise a body of volunteers from Connecticut, and to call on the battalions of Jersey with those of New York to join him. He was to examine the fortifications of the city, and up the river; to put them in the best possible state of defence, and to disarm and secure all those whose conduct and declarations rendered them justly suspected of designs unfriendly

friendly to the views of Congress, especially those on Long Island. All the arms and ammunition found in their possession were to be collected for the use of the army.

Congress had already taken up the subject of disarming and securing the disaffected in Queen's County, on Long Island, where the people had refused to elect members to the provincial convention. They had ordered two battalions to enter the country at its opposite extremities on the same day, and to secure the arms of every individual who had voted against chusing members to the convention. These vigorous orders, however, were soon countermanded, and a regiment raised in Connecticut for the special purpose, under the command of Colonel Waterbury, was ordered to be discharged. No direct reason has been assigned for this fluctuation in the proceedings of Congress, but it appears that the convention of New York was very much opposed to the commencement of hostilities in that colony, and also claimed for itself the direction of measures to be executed within it. Some apprehensions seem to have been entertained, that so strong a measure might throw into the arms of the enemy all those who were not yet prepared for open war; and that its being executed under the immediate direction of Congress might excite the jealousy of the local authorities. Whatever motives might lead to it, the Commander in Chief very

very much regretted this change of system; and, in a letter to General Lee, after expressing that regret, says, "They, I doubt not, had their reasons for it; but to me it appears, that the period is arrived when nothing less than the most decisive and vigorous measures should be pursued. Our enemies from the other side of the Atlantic will be sufficiently numerous—it highly concerns us to have as few internal ones as possible."

In a subsequent letter, after Sir Henry Clinton had sailed from Boston, he stated to General Lee his apprehension, that, on the arrival of the troops in New York, Governor Tryon would be ready to join them at the head of a great number of the inhabitants, disaffected to the American cause; and therefore he urged the necessity of being decisive and expeditious in his operations. "The tories" (a term designating all those who favoured the enemy,) he said, "should be disarmed, and the principal characters among them secured." He expressed a hope that Governor Tryon would be of the number. But considering General Lee to be under the directions of Congress, to which body that officer had applied for instructions, he only expressed his wishes, that he might be permitted to act in that decisive manner which comported with the opinions of them both.

Congress, however, had now submitted this whole subject to the colonial authorities, with a recom-

recommendation to them to disarm the disaffected, and to secure the most dangerous of them, either by confining them, or obliging them to give security for their good behaviour. To enable the local authorities to comply with this recommendation, they were empowered * to call to their aid any

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" * Whereas it has been represented to this Congress, that divers well meaning and honest, but uninformed people in these colonies, have, by the art and address of ministerial agents, been deceived and drawn into erroneous opinions respecting the American cause, and the probable issue of the present contest:

" Resolved, That it be recommended to the different committees, and other friends to American liberty in the said colonies, to treat all such persons with kindness and attention; to consider them as the inhabitants of a country determined to be free, and to view their errors as proceeding rather from want of information, than want of virtue or public spirit; to explain to them the origin, nature, and extent of the present controversy; to acquaint them with the fate of the numerous petitions presented to his Majesty, as well by assemblies as by Congress, for reconciliation and redress of grievances, and that the last from this Congress, humbly requesting the single favour of being heard, like all others, has proved unsuccessful; to unfold to them the various arts of administration to ensnare and enslave us, and the manner in which we have been cruelly driven to defend by arms those very rights, liberties, and estates, which we and our forefathers had so long enjoyed unmolested in the reigns of his present Majesty's predecessors. And it is hereby recommended to all conventions and assemblies, in these colonies, liberally to distribute among the people the proceedings of this and the former Congress, the late speeches of the great patriots

any continental troops stationed in or near their respective colonies, who were ordered, while employed

patriots in both houses of parliament relative to American grievances, and such other pamphlets and papers as tend to elucidate the merits of the American cause, the Congress being fully persuaded, that the more our right to the enjoyments of our ancient liberties and privileges is examined, the more just and necessary our present opposition to ministerial tyranny will appear.

"And with respect to all such unworthy Americans, as, regardless of their duty to their Creator, their country, and their posterity, have taken part with our oppressors, and, influenced by the hope of possessing ignominious rewards, strive to recommend themselves to the bounty of administration, by misrepresenting and traducing the conduct and principles of the friends of American liberty, and opposing every measure formed for its preservation and security;

"Resolved, That it be recommended to the different assemblies, conventions, and committees, or councils of safety of the United Colonies, by the most speedy and effectual measures, to frustrate the mischievous machinations, and to restrain the wicked practices of these men. And it is the opinion of this Congress, that they ought to be disarmed, and the more dangerous among them, either kept in safe custody, or bound with sufficient sureties to their good behaviour.

"And in order that the said assemblies, conventions, committees, or councils of safety, may be enabled with greater ease and facility to carry this resolution into execution,

"Resolved, That they be authorized to call to their aid whatever continental troops, stationed in or near their respective colonies, as may be conveniently spared from their more immediate duty; and the commanding officers of such troops are hereby

ployed in this service, to place themselves entirely under the direction and control of the colonial government. General Lee experienced no difficulty in raising the volunteers required from Connecticut. The people of that province were remarkably zealous and enterprising; and Governor Trumbull having sanctioned the measure, the numbers deemed necessary for the expedition immediately embodied, and Lee commenced his march for New York at the head of twelve hundred men.

The inhabitants of the place were much alarmed at his approach. Threats had been uttered by Captain Parker, of the Asia man of war, then lying in the harbour, that he would destroy the town in the event of its being entered by any considerable body of provincial forces; and it was believed that these threats would be executed.

A committee of safety had been appointed to exercise the powers of government during the recess of the Provincial Congress; and they ad-

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hereby directed to afford the said assemblies, conventions, committees, or councils of safety, all such assistance in executing this resolution as they may require, and which, consistent with the good of the service, may be supplied.

"Resolved, That all detachments of continental troops, which may be ordered on the business in the foregoing resolution mentioned, be, while so employed, under the direction and control of the assemblies, conventions, committees, or councils of safety aforesaid."

dressed a letter to General Lee, manifesting their astonishment at the report, that he was about to enter their town without any previous intimation of his design to them, and their fears of the mischievous consequences which would result from such a measure. They could not believe it possible that such a step had been resolved on without being communicated to them; but if in this they were mistaken, they expressed the most earnest solicitude that he would halt his troops on the confines of Connecticut, till they could have further explanations with him.

Lee held in utter contempt the threats which had been thrown out by the enemy of destroying the town, and continued his march to that place with the utmost celerity. He addressed a letter* to

* This letter is so truly characteristic of the writer, and treats in a manner so peculiar to himself, the measures of Congress on this subject, that, although it may not be immediately connected with the Life of General Washington, the reader will not be displeased with its insertion.

"SIR, "*Stamford, January* 22, 1775.

"AS General Washington has informed the Congress of his motives for detaching me, it is needless to trouble you upon the subject. I am, therefore, only to inform you, that I have collected a body of about twelve hundred men from the colony of Connecticut, whose zeal and ardour, demonstrated on this occasion, cannot be sufficiently praised. With this body I am

to Congress, in which he displayed in such strong terms, the necessity of pursuing, with respect to

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marching directly to New York, to execute the different purposes for which I am detached. I am sensible, Sir, that nothing can carry the air of greater presumption, than a servant intruding his opinion unasked upon his master; but, at the same time, there are certain seasons, when the real danger of the master may not only excuse, but render laudable the servant's officiousness. I therefore flatter myself that the Congress will receive, with indulgence and lenity, the opinion I shall offer. The scheme of simply disarming the tories, seems to me totally ineffectual; it will only embitter their minds, and add virus to their venom. They can, and will, always be supplied with fresh arms by the enemy. That of seizing the most dangerous will, I apprehend, from the vagueness of the instruction, be attended with some bad consequences, and can answer no good one. It opens so wide a door for partiality and prejudice to the different Congresses and Committees on the Continent, that much discord and animosity will probably ensue; it being next to impossible to distinguish who are, and who are not the most dangerous. The plan of explaining to those deluded people, the justice and merits of the American cause, is certainly generous and humane, but I am afraid will be fruitless. They are so rivetted in their opinions, that I am persuaded should an angel descend from heaven with his golden trumpet, and ring in their ears that their conduct was criminal, he would be disregarded. I had lately myself an instance of their infatuation, which, if it is not impertinent, I will relate. At Newport, I took the liberty, without any authority but the conviction of necessity, to administer a very strong oath to some of the leading tories, for which liberty I humbly ask pardon of the Congress. One article of this oath was to take arms in defence

to New York, a different course from that which their resolution authorized, that instead of leaving him

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defence of their country, if called upon by the voice of the Congress. To this Colonel Wanton and others flatly refused their assent—to take arms against their sovereign, they said, was too monstrous an impiety. I asked them, if they had lived at the time of the revolution, whether they would have been revolutionists? Their answers were at first evasive, circuitous, and unintelligible, but, by fixing them down precisely to the question, I at length drew from them a positive confession, that no violence, no provocation on the part of the Court, could prevail upon them to act with the Continent. Such, I am afraid, is the creed and principles of the whole party, great and small: sense, reason, argument, and eloquence, have been expended in vain; and in vain you may still argue and reason to the end of time. Even the common feelings and resentments of humanity have not aroused them. But rather with a malignant pleasure they have beheld the destruction of their fellow-citizens and relations. But I am running into declamation, perhaps impertinent and presuming, when I ought to confine myself to the scheme I submit to your consideration. It is, Sir, in the first place, to disarm all the manifestly disaffected, as well of the lower as the higher class, not on the principle of putting them in a state of impotence, (for this I observed before will not be the case,) but to supply our troops with arms, of which they stand in too great need. Secondly, to appraise their estates, and oblige them to deposit at least the value of one half of their respective property in the hands of the Continental Congress, as a security for their good behaviour. And, lastly, to administer the strongest oath that can be devised, to act offensively and defensively in support of the com-

him entirely under the control of the local government, a committee of three from their own

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mon rights. I confess that men so eaten up with bigotry as the bulk of them appear to be, will not consider themselves as bound by this oath: particularly as it is in some measure forced, they will argue it is by no means obligatory—but, if I mistake not, it will be a sort of criterion, by which you will be able to distinguish the desperate fanaticks from those who are reclaimable. The former must of course be secured and carried into some interior parts of the Continent, where they cannot be dangerous. This mode of proceeding, I conceive, (if any can,) will be effectual—but whether it meet the approbation or disapprobation of the Congress, I most humbly conjure them not to attribute the proposal to arrogance or self-conceit, or pragmatical officiousness, but, at worst, to an intemperate zeal for the public service. Notwithstanding the apparent slimness of the authority, as I am myself convinced that it is substantial, I think it my duty to communicate a circumstance to Congress: I have with me here, Sir, a deserter from Captain Wallace's ship before New-Port. It is necessary to inform you that this Captain Wallace has the reputation of being the most imprudent and rash of all mortals, particularly when he is heated with wine, which, as reported, is a daily incident; that in these moments he blabs his most secret instructions even to the common men. This deserter, then, informs us, that the Captain a few months ago assembled the sailors and marines on the quarter-deck, and assured them, by way of encouragement, that they were to proceed very soon to New York, where they were to be joined by His Majesty's most loyal subjects of White Plains, Ploughkeepice, and Long Island; and at the same time bestowed abundantly his curses on the Admiral and General for their dilatoriness and scandalous conduct in not availing

own body was detached to consult with him and the council of safety respecting the defence of the place,

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availing themselves sooner of the invitation they had received from the worthy gentlemen. The Congress will make what comments they please on this information, which I must repeat I thought it my duty to communicate. Upon the whole, Sir, you may be assured, that it is the intention of the ministerialists to take possession, and immediately, of New York. The intercepted letters, the unguarded expressions of their officers in their interviews with ours in the line; but above all, the manifest advantages resulting to their cause from this measure, put their intention beyond dispute. With submission, therefore, to the wisdom of Congress, it behoves them, I should think, not to lose a moment in securing this important post, which, if in the hands of the enemy, must cut the Continent in twain, and render it almost impossible for the northern and southern colonies to support each other. This crisis, when every thing is at stake, is not a time to be over complaisant to the timidity of the inhabitants of any particular spot. I have now under my command a respectable force, adequate to the purpose of securing the place, and purging all its environs of traitors, on which subject, I shall expect with impatience the determination of the Congress. Their orders I hope to receive before or immediately on my arrival.

"This instant the enclosed express from the Provincial Congress of New York, was delivered into my hands; but as these gentlemen probably are not fully apprised of the danger hanging over their heads, as I have received intelligence from the camp that the fleet is sailed, and that it is necessary to urge my march, I shall proceed with one division of the forces under my command to that city. A moment's delay may be fatal.

place, and he was instructed to obey the directions of that committee.

As might well have been expected from the experience and talents of General Lee, his opinions guided both the committee sent for his government, and the council of safety; and whatever he suggested, they directed him to execute. It was determined to fortify some commanding part of the city, to be occupied by two thousand men; to erect enclosed batteries on both sides of the water near Hell Gate, so as to protect the town against pirat esthrough the Sound, and at the same time to secure a communication with Long Island,

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The force I shall carry with me is not strong enough to act offensively, but just sufficient to secure the city against any immediate designs of the enemy. If this is to give umbrage, if the Governor and Captain of the man of war are pleased to construe this step as an act of positive hostility, if they are to prescribe what number of your troops are, and what number are not to enter the city, all I can say is, that New York must be considered as the minister's place, and not the Continent's. I must now, Sir, beg pardon for the length of this letter, and more so, for the presumption in offering so freely my thoughts to the Congress, from whom it is my duty simply to receive my orders, and as a servant and soldier, strictly to obey; which none can do with greater ardour and affection, than,

"Sir,

"Your most obedient humble Servant."

"*To the Hon. John Hancock, Esq. President of the Continental Congress.*"

where

where it was determined to form a strong fortified camp for three thousand men; and to make the defences of the highlands as respectable as possible, which were immediately to be garrisoned by a battalion of regular troops.

General Clinton arrived almost at the same instant with General Lee, but without any troops. He gave out that none were coming; that no hostilities were contemplated against New York; and that he was himself merely on a visit to his friend Tryon. "If it be really so," added General Lee, in his letter containing this communication, "it is the most whimsical piece of civility I ever heard of." General Clinton did not affect to conceal his objects, but declared that he was to proceed to North Carolina, where he expected the small force he should carry with him would be joined by five regiments from Europe.

The fortifications of New York were prosecuted with vigour; and Captain Parker, finding his threats entirely disregarded, no longer uttered them, but avowed his wish to save a town which contained so many loyal inhabitants.

About the middle of February, the severe cold set in, and the ice became sufficiently firm to bear the troops. General Washington was now disposed to execute the bold plan he had formed, of attacking the enemy in Boston. Several considerations concurred in recommending this hazardous enterprise.

enterprise. There being no prospect of a sufficient supply of powder to force them out by regular approaches, and bombardment; the very great importance attached to a destruction of the present army, before reinforcements should arrive from Europe, an event not to be produced without the command of the water. Should the town be taken by regular approaches; the certainty that he must soon lose the present advantage afforded by the ice, of moving off an extensive plain, and thereby approaching the town by a less dangerous direction; the confidence he felt in the courage of his troops; all disposed him to risk an immediate assault, although he had not ammunition to cover the advance of his army with artillery. A council of war, however, summoned on the occasion, was almost unanimous against the measure; and it was therefore abandoned, though with reluctance. The want of ammunition for their artillery, was a principal inducement to this opinion. It is probable the attempt might not have succeeded. It must certainly have been attended with considerable loss. The advice of the council, however, seems to have been adopted with regret. In communicating their opinion to Congress, the General observed, "Perhaps the irksomeness of my situation may have given different ideas to me from those which influence the gentlemen I consulted; and might have inclined me to put more

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to the hazard than was consistent with prudence. If it had this effect, I am not sensible of it, as I endeavoured to give the subject all the consideration a matter of such importance required. True it is, and I cannot help acknowledging, that I have many disagreeable sensations on account of my situation; for to have the eyes of the whole Continent fixed on me, with anxious expectation of some great event, and to be restrained in every military operation for want of the necessary means to carry it on, is not very pleasing; especially as the means used to conceal my weakness from the enemy, conceals it also from our friends, and adds to their wonder."

Towards the latter end of February, there were various appearances among the British troops in Boston, indicating an intention to evacuate that place. In the opinion that New York must be their object, General Washington pressed General Lee to hasten, as much as possible, the fortifications around that city, and his preparations to receive the enemy; but as these appearances might be entirely deceptive, and he had now received a small supply of powder, he determined to prosecute with vigour a plan he had formed, to force General Howe either to come to an action, or to abandon the town of Boston.

Since the allowance of a bounty, recruiting had been rather more successful. The effective regular force.

force, engaged for the year, now amounted to something more than fourteen thousand men. In addition to these troops, the Commander in Chief called out about six thousand of the militia of Massachussetts; and thus reinforced, he determined to take possession of, and fortify the heights of Dorchester, from whence it would be in his power greatly to annoy the ships in the harbour, and the soldiers in the town. The taking of this position he hoped, and was convinced, must bring on a general action, as the enemy would inevitably attempt to drive him from it; but if in this he should be mistaken, he resolved to make the fortifications of the heights of Dorchester only preparatory to his seizing and fortifying Nook's Hill, and the points opposite the south end of Boston, which entirely commanded the harbour, a great part of the town, and the beach from whence an embarkation must take place in the event of a retreat.

To facilitate the execution of this plan, and in pursuance of the advice given in a council of war, a heavy bombardment and cannonade on the town and lines of the enemy was commenced on the evening of the second of March, from the forts, which was repeated the two succeeding nights. On the night of the fourth, immediately after the firing had begun, a considerable detachment of the Americans under the command of General Thomas, crossing the Neck from Roxbury, took

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possession of the heights without opposition; and though the ground was so hard as to be almost impenetrable, in consequence of which they were obliged to avail themselves of fascines, and other materials carried to the place, yet, by very great activity and industry through the night, the works were so far advanced by the morning, as in a great degree to cover them from the shot of the enemy. When day-light disclosed their operations to the British, a considerable degree of embarrassment appeared, and an ineffectual fire was commenced on the party in possession of the heights, who opened in turn a battery on them, and continued with unremitting labour to strengthen their position.

It was now necessary to dislodge the Americans from the heights, or to evacuate the town; and the British General, as had been foreseen, determined to embrace the former part of the alternative. Lord Percy, with part of five regiments, and the grenadiers, and light infantry, amounting to about three thousand men, was ordered on this service; and the next day the troops were embarked, and fell down to the castle, in order to proceed from thence up the river to the intended scene of action; but they were scattered by a furious storm, which disabled them from prosecuting the enterprise at that time; and before they could again be in readiness for the attack, the works were made so strong, that it was thought unad-

unadvisable to attempt to force them, and the evacuation of the town was resolved on.

In the expectation that the flower of the British troops would be engaged in the attack on the heights of Dorchester, General Washington had concerted a plan for availing himself of that occasion to attack the town of Boston itself. Four thousand chosen men were held in readiness to embark at the mouth of Cambridge River, on a signal to be given, if the enemy should be out in such force, as to justify an opinion that an attack on the town might be made with a good prospect of success. These troops were to embark in two divisions, the first to be led by Brigadier General Sullivan, the second by Brigadier General Green, and the whole to be under the command of Major General Putnam. The boats were to be preceded by three floating batteries, which were to keep up a heavy fire on that part of the town where the troops were to land. It was proposed that the first division should land at the powder-house, and gain possession of Bacon Hill; the second at Barton's Point, or a little south of it, and after securing that post, to join the other division, and force the enemy's works and gates, so as to give admission to the troops from Roxbury.

Had this plan succeeded, the British army in Boston must have been entirely destroyed. Of its success General Washington entertained the most sanguine

sanguine hopes, and very greatly regretted the storm which defeated the proposed attack on the heights of Dorchester, and consequently the residue of his plan, the execution of which was entirely dependent on that attack.

The General soon received information of the determination of the enemy to evacuate Boston. A paper, signed by some of the select men of the town, and brought out with a flag, stated the fact, and was accompanied with propositions said to be made on the part of General Howe, but not signed by him, relative to the security of the town, and the peaceable embarkation of his army. As this letter was not addressed to the Commander in Chief, nor authenticated by the signature of General Howe, nor by any act obligatory on him, it was thought improper that General Washington should directly notice it, and it was determined that the officer to whom it was delivered, should return an answer, stating the reasons why a more particular regard was not paid to it.

In the mean time, the determination to continue to advance on the enemy, and to secure Nook's Hill, was changed. The reason assigned for abandoning this plan was, that it was not deemed advisable, now that the evacuation of Boston was certain, to press the retreating army too closely; because their embarkation could not be prevented, and a longer delay would give farther time to strengthen New York, which the General still persisted

persisted to think would be their destination. In this opinion he moved considerable detachments towards that place, before the town of Boston was actually evacuated. This event took place on the seventeenth of March, and was, probably, in a degree precipitated by some works thrown up on Nook's Hill the preceding evening. As the enemy continued some time in Nantasket Road, so as to create a suspicion that they might possibly design to re-land, the General thought it necessary to take possession of the heights around the town, and to erect fortifications on Fort Hill, a point of great natural strength, and commanding the place where an invading army would most probably debark. But in a few days the whole fleet set sail, and the American army proceeded by divisions to New York.

The recovery of this important town was an event which gave very general joy. It was "resolved, that the thanks of Congress in their own name, and in the name of the Thirteen United Colonies, whom they represent, be presented to his Excellency General Washington, and the officers and soldiers under his command, for their wise and spirited conduct in the siege and acquisition of Boston, and that a medal of gold be struck in commemoration of this great event, and presented to his Excellency; and that a committee of three be appointed to prepare a letter of thanks, and a proper device for the medal."

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The town of Boston was left standing, and much less mischief was done to the houses and property of the inhabitants, than had been apprehended. A great number of those who had been attached to the royal cause removed with the army, and transported their effects with them to Halifax. Several pieces of heavy ordnance were found, many of which the enemy had rendered useless by knocking off the trunnions, and the residue were spiked up. Other stores were also left, though not to a very considerable amount.

CHAPTER V.

Invasion of Canada meditated—the Americans enter that Province—Siege of Saint John's—Capture of Fort Chamblie—Carleton defeated at Longueisle—Saint John capitulates—Montreal surrenders—Arnold's Expedition by the Way of the Kennebec—he arrives before Quebec; and retires to Point aux Trembles—Montgomery lays siege to Quebec—unsuccessful Attack on that Place—Death of Montgomery—Blockade of Quebec continued—General Thomas takes command of the Army—the Blockade of Quebec is raised—General Sullivan takes the command—Battle of the Three Rivers—Canada evacuated.

WHILST these transactions were passing in Boston, other events, of deep and serious interest to both parties, took place still further to the north.

Great dissatisfaction prevailed in Canada. The Quebec act, and other measures of administration, had disquieted the British settlers, without attaching to Government either the Indians, or French inhabitants. Believing that province to be in a state of most perfect security, it had been left almost entirely undefended; and the regular troops on the continent of America had been chiefly drawn

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to Boston. At the same time, Quebec was known to be a place of deposit for military stores to an immense amount; and it was also known that great efforts were making to conciliate the Canadians and Indians, in order to promote an invasion of the United Colonies from that quarter. They had heretofore resisted those endeavours, but there was much reason to believe, that if not counteracted, the designs of the administration, when supported by a strong military force, would prevail. The possession of that country was believed to be all-important to either party, and it was thought that its present temper was such as to render it probable that its weight would be thrown into the scale of those who should first shew in it a force sufficient for the protection of its inhabitants. The facility with which Crown Point and Tyconderoga had been taken, and the perfect command of the lakes George and Champlain acquired, added to the motives already stated, inspired Congress with the daring design of anticipating the plans meditated against them in that province, by taking possession of Canada.

So early as the month of June 1775, a resolution passed that body, directing General Schuyler to repair to Tyconderoga, and to take the proper measures for securing that post and Crown Point, and for retaining the entire command of the lakes. He was at the same time authorized, if he should

find it practicable, and not disagreeable to the Canadians, to take possession of St. John's and Montreal, and to pursue any other measures in Canada, which might have a tendency to promote the peace and security of the United Colonies.

Near three thousand men from New England and New York, to be commanded under Major-General Schuyler, by Brigadiers Wooster and Montgomery, were designed for this service; and a number of batteaux were directed to be built at Tyconderoga and Crown Point, to convey the troops along lake Champlain, into the neighbourhood of Canada. But the information possessed by Congress on this subject, was not such as to justify them in deciding absolutely on the expedition; and, therefore, their resolution left much to the discretion of General Schuyler, on whose talents and attachment to the cause, the highest confidence was very deservedly placed.

Congress had made great exertions to facilitate this expedition. Fifty thousand dollars in specie were voted for the expense of the army in Canada, and the Convention of New York was urged to hurry on the troops designed for that service.

General Schuyler, who was at New York, when this important command was confided to him, hastened to Tyconderoga, in order to make the necessary arrangements for the contemplated expedition. The troops of that department belonging

ing to different colonies, stationed at different places, acknowledging no one commanding officer, were found in a state of entire disorganization. The stores were misapplied, or wasted; no sort of subordination, or camp discipline, was observed; and it can scarcely be doubted, that had the enemy been in a condition to attempt a surprise, Tyconderoga and Crown Point would have been lost with as much facility as they had been acquired *.

The intelligence from Canada which had been

* The situation of the troops is thus described by General Schuyler, in a letter from Tyconderoga, of the 18th of July, to General Washington:

"You will expect that I should say something about this place, and the troops here. Not one earthly thing for offence or defence has been done.

"*The commanding officer had no orders, he only came to reinforce the garrison, and he expected the General.* About ten, last night, I arrived at the landing place, the north end of lake George, a fort occupied by a Captain and one hundred men. A sentinel, on being informed I was in the boat, quitted his post to go and awake the guard, consisting of three men, in which he had no success. I walked up, and came to another, a serjeant's guard. Here the sentinel challenged, but suffered me to come up to him, the whole guard, like the first, being in the soundest sleep. I could have cut off both guards, and then have set fire to the block-house, destroyed the stores, and starved the people here. But I hope to get the better of this inattention. The officers and men are all good looking people, and I really believe will make good soldiers, as soon as I can get the better of this *non chalance* of theirs.

forwarded to Congress, confirmed the reports before received of the weakness of the regular troops by which that province was defended; of the great exertions of Governor Carleton to engage the Canadians and the Indians to take up arms and invade the United Colonies, and of their unwillingness to do so; but the opinion was still maintained, that unless the colonists shewed a sufficient force in that country to give confidence and security to their friends, the machinations of the Governor would ultimately prevail.

In consequence of this intelligence, the orders to General Schuyler were made unconditional, and he was directed positively to enter Canada. He commenced, and assiduously prosecuted the task of preparing vessels for the transportation of the troops; a task the more laborious and tedious, as the timber for the batteaux was then to be procured from the woods. Before the preparations were complete, or the troops destined for the expedition had all assembled, the impatience expressed by their friends in Canada, and some information which was received of a vessel of force soon to be launched at St. John's, on the river Sorel, in order to enter the lakes, rendered an immediate movement advisable. General Schuyler had returned to Albany, to hold a Congress with the Indians, whose dispositions were very justly suspected to be hostile. When this intelligence was communicated

cated to him by General Montgomery, an officer of very distinguished merit, then at Crown Point, orders were immediately given him to embark with the troops then in readiness; and General Schuyler having directed the expected reinforcements to rendezvous at the Isle Aux Noix, twelve miles south of St. John's, followed Montgomery, and joined him before he reached that place.

Circular letters to the Canadians, exhorting them to rouse and assert their liberties, and declaring that the Americans entered their country as friends and protectors, and not as enemies, were immediately dispersed among them; and believing that they would be encouraged thereby, it was determined to advance directly on St. John's. The American force, amounting to about one thousand men, entirely destitute of artillery, embarked on the Sorel on the 6th, and proceeding towards St. John's, landed within about a mile and a half of that place, in a swamp, from whence they marched in order towards the fort, for the purpose of reconnoitring its situation. On the march they were suddenly attacked by a body of Indians, whom they dispersed; after which, they threw up a small entrenchment, and encamped for the night. The intelligence received at this place, respecting the situation of St. John's, and of the vessel preparing to enter lake Champlain, determined them to return to the Isle Aux Noix, there

to wait for their remaining troops and artillery; and in the mean time to secure the entrance of the lakes.

The Isle Aux Noix lies at the junction of the Sorel, with lake Champlain; and to prevent the armed vessels at St. John's from entering the latter, a boom was drawn across the channel, which is narrow at that place.

General Schuyler, who had been for some time much indisposed, became now so excessively ill, as to be unable to leave his bed, and the command devolved on Montgomery.

Mr. Livingston, a gentleman residing on the river Chamblie, who was very strongly attached to the American cause, and had rendered it great service, pressed so earnestly for a detachment from the army, to cut off the communication between St. John's and La Prairie, that a party was ordered out for that service. But it was seized with one of those panics to which raw troops are peculiarly liable, and without having seen any real danger, they fled precipitately back to camp.

Livingston, in the mean time, counting on the aid for which he had applied, had assembled about three hundred Canadian volunteers, and grew extremely apprehensive of being left exposed to the whole force of the enemy.

Montgomery flattered himself that his troops, ashamed of their late misconduct, were determined

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to retrieve their reputation; and as the artillery and expected reinforcements had now arrived, he again embarked his army, consisting of not quite two thousand men, on the Sorel, and proceeded to invest Fort St. John's.

This place was garrisoned by five or six hundred regulars, with about two hundred Canadian militia, and was well provided with artillery and military stores. The army of Canada, as well as the other armies of the United Colonies, was almost entirely without powder, and of consequence the siege made slow progress. Their necessities in this respect were fortunately relieved by the capture of Fort Chamblie, which, being supposed to be covered by Fort St. John's, was not in a defensible condition. This Fort was suddenly attacked, and carried by a detachment, consisting of about fifty united colonists, under Major Brown, and three hundred Canadians, under Major Livingston. The garrison became prisoners of war, and some pieces of artillery were taken; but the most valuable acquisition made at this place was about one hundred and twenty barrels of gunpowder, which enabled the American General to proceed with vigour against St. John's. Though the only person in his camp possessing any military experience, he was over-ruled in his plans by his field officers; and with extreme mortification declared in one of his letters to General Schuyler, that

that the place could not be taken till it should surrender for want of provisions; and that if he did not fear the public service might suffer, he would not stay one hour longer at the head of troops whose operations he could not direct. The garrison defended themselves with resolution, and indulged for some time the hope of being relieved.

Colonel M'Lean, a veteran officer, had exerted himself to raise a Scotch regiment, under the title of Royal Highland Emigrants, to be composed of the natives of that country, who had lately arrived in America, and who, in consequence of the troubles, had not obtained settlements. With these, and a few hundred Canadians, the Colonel was posted near the junction of the Sorel with the St. Lawrence. General Carleton was at Montreal, where, with great difficulty, he had collected about a thousand men, chiefly Canadians. Among them were some regulars and volunteers, and several British officers. At the head of these troops he hoped to effect a junction with M'Lean, after which he designed to march with his whole force against Montgomery, and endeavour to raise the siege; but on attempting to cross over from Montreal, he was encountered and entirely defeated at Longuid by a detachment of American troops under Colonel Warner. Another party advanced on M'Lean, who, being entirely abandoned by his Canadians, so soon as they were informed of the defeat

defeat of the Governor, and having also received information that Arnold was approaching Point Levy, precipitately retreated to Quebec. The Americans occupied the post he had abandoned, and immediately erected batteries on a point of land at the junction of the Sorel with the St. Lawrence, where they also constructed several armed rafts and floating batteries, to prevent Carleton, with the vessels at Montreal, from escaping down the river.

Montgomery, who, notwithstanding the difficulties he experienced from his troops, was pressing the siege of St. John's with great vigour, advanced his works very near the fort, when the account of the success at Longuid reached him. On receipt of this intelligence, he permitted one of the prisoners to go into the fort, with whom he sent in a flag of truce, and a letter to Major Preston, the commanding officer, requiring him to surrender, and thereby prevent the further effusion of blood, which must necessarily be occasioned by a fruitless and obstinate resistance. All hopes of relief having now vanished, and having endeavoured in vain to obtain some delay, the garrison capitulated, on being allowed, in consideration of their brave defence of the place, the honours of war.

Scarcely was this first success obtained, when the fatal consequences of short enlistments began to discover themselves. The time of service for

which the troops had engaged being now near expiring, great difficulty was experienced in prevailing on them to proceed farther; and the General was under the necessity of stipulating explicitly, that all who wished it, should be discharged at Montreal, before he could induce them even to march against that place. Having effected this compromise, he proceeded against Montreal, while his floating batteries, under Colonel Easton, advanced up the St. Lawrence, and not only effectually prevented the armed vessels of the enemy from making the escape they had projected to Quebec, but drove them from their anchors still higher up the river.

Montreal was not in a condition to be defended. Montgomery, after engaging to allow the Canadians their own laws, the free exercise of their religion, and the privilege of governing themselves, took peaceable possession of the town, and Governor Carleton retired to his flotilla. While preparations were making to attack the vessels with the floating batteries, under Colonel Easton, aided by some boats from Montreal, carrying a few field pieces, and their destruction was considered as certain, the Governor was conveyed in a boat with muffled oars, down the river in a dark night, and made his escape to Quebec. The fleet soon afterwards surrendered, and the General prepared with the utmost expedition, to proceed with the few troops

troops who were willing to follow him to the capital of Canada.

At Montreal he found, to his extreme mortification, that his promise to discharge them was claimed by many of his soldiers. He offered a suit of the clothes taken with that town, to those who would engage to serve only till the 15th day of April; but they could not be, generally, prevailed on to re-enlist. These untoward circumstances only stimulated their gallant leader to more vigorous exertions. In a letter to General Schuyler, of the 17th November, he says, "I have had great difficulties about the troops; I am afraid many of them will go home; however, depending on my good fortune, I hope to keep enough to give the final blow to ministerial politics in this province; and I hope effectual measures will be taken to prevent their laying hold of it again."

It was necessary to leave a sufficient number of his small corps at Montreal, St. John's, and Chamblie, to garrison those places, keep open the communication between Quebec and the United Colonies, preserve the dependence of the Canadians, overawe the Indians, and hold in check the garrisons above him at Detroit and Niagara. When these essential objects were provided for with the utmost possible economy of men, they yet formed such deductions from his force, as to leave but little more than three hundred men to follow their General in the enterprise against Quebec.

General Washington foreseeing that the whole force of Canada would be concentrated about Montreal, had projected an expedition against Quebec, by a detachment from his camp before Boston, which was to march by the way of Kennebec river, and passing through the dreary wilderness lying between the settled parts of Maine and the St. Lawrence, and crossing the rugged mountains and deep morasses which abounded in that country, to penetrate into Canada about ninety miles below Montreal.

The object proposed by this hardy enterprise, was either to compel Carleton, whose force would not admit of a division, to draw his troops from the upper country, and thereby open an easy passage to the army invading the province by the way of the river Sorel, or, if he should maintain that position, to take possession of Quebec, which all his accounts assured him was absolutely unable to hold out against the force which would appear before it; and, if attacked by an American army before the return of Carleton, would surrender without firing a shot.

This arduous enterprise was committed to Colonel Arnold. About a thousand men, consisting of New England infantry, some volunteers *, a company of artillery, under a Captain Lamb, and

* Colonel Burr, since Vice-President of the United States, was of this number.

three

three companies of rifle men, were selected for the service.

Notwithstanding the unremitting exertions of the General, the delays in expediting them, occasioned by the derangements of the army, were such, that they could not commence their march till about the middle of September.

The success of this expedition very much depended on the friendly temper of the province; and the instructions given to Arnold, inculcated with great care the cultivation of a good understanding with the Canadians. They even enjoined him to abandon the enterprise, if this sudden invasion of their country should threaten to irritate them, and induce them to take up arms against the United Colonies. He was also particularly directed to use the utmost possible expedition, to keep up a correspondence with the upper army, which, it was hoped, might be effected by means of the St. Francois Indians; and to keep the General himself regularly informed of every event of importance which should occur. He was furnished with about one thousand pounds in specie to defray contingent expenses, and with a cargo of manifestoes to be dispersed through Canada.

The letter accompanying these orders is strongly indicative of the impressions which had been received of the dispositions of the Canadians, as well as of the importance attributed to that province in the existing war.

"You

"You are," said the General, "entrusted with a command of the utmost consequence to the interests and liberties of America; upon your conduct and courage, and that of the Officers and soldiers detached on this expedition, not only the success of the present enterprise, and your own honour, but the safety and welfare of the whole Continent may depend. I charge you, therefore, and the officers and soldiers under your command, as you value your own safety and honour, and the favour and esteem of your country, that you consider yourselves as marching, not through an enemy's country, but that of your friends and brethren, for such the inhabitants of Canada and the Indian nations have approved themselves, in this unhappy contest between Great Britain and America. That you check, by every motive of duty and fear of punishment, every attempt to plunder and insult the inhabitants of Canada. Should any American soldier be so base and infamous as to injure any Canadian, or Indian, in his person or property, I do most earnestly enjoin you to bring him to such severe and exemplary punishment as the enormity of the crime may require; should it extend to death itself, it will not be disproportionate to its guilt at such a time, and in such a cause. But I hope and trust that the brave men who have voluntarily engaged in this expedition will be governed by far different views; that their order, discipline, and regularity of behaviour, will be as con-

conspicuous as their valour. I also give it in charge to you, to avoid all disrespect to, and contempt of, the religion of the country, and its ceremonies. Prudence, policy, and a true christian spirit, will lead us to look with compassion on their errors, without insulting them. While we are contending for our own liberty, we should be very cautious of violating the rights of conscience in others, and should ever consider, that God alone is the Judge of the hearts of men, and to him only, in this case, they are answerable.

" Upon the whole, Sir, I beg you to inculcate on the officers and soldiers, the necessity of preserving the strictest order during their march through Canada. To represent to them the shame, disgrace, and ruin to themselves and country, if they should by their conduct turn the hearts of our brethren in Canada against us. And on the other hand, the honour and rewards which await them, if, by their prudence and good behaviour, they conciliate the affections of the Canadians and Indians to the great interests of America, and convert those favourable dispositions they have shewn into a lasting union."

The opinion which had been formed of the favourable dispositions of the Canadians was not disappointed by the event. They gave essential aid to the Americans, and very much facilitated their march through that province. But the previous

vious difficulties to be surmounted, were much greater than had been apprehended. The country had never been well explored, and it opposed obstacles to the march, which only perseverance like that of Arnold's, and his brave and hardy followers, could have conquered. Colonel Enos, who commanded the rear division, consisting of one-third of the detachment, returned from the Dead River, a branch of the Kennebec, with his men; and though his appearance excited at first the utmost indignation in the army, yet, on being arrested, he was acquitted by a court-martial, on the principle, that it was absolutely impracticable to obtain provisions on the route sufficient to preserve his troops from perishing with famine.

Arnold, who at the head of the two first divisions still prosecuted his march, was thirty-two days traversing a hideous wilderness, without seeing a house, or any thing human. The troops were under the necessity of hauling their batteaux up rapid streams, of taking them upon their shoulders, with all their provisions, across carrying places, and of traversing, and frequently repassing, for the purpose of bringing their baggage, deep morasses, thick woods, and high mountains. These impediments, notwithstanding the zealous and wonderfully persevering exertions of his men, so protracted his march, that though he had expected certainly to enter Canada about the middle

of October, he did not reach the first settlements on the Chaudiere, which empties itself into the St. Lawrence, near Quebec, till the third of November.

On the high grounds which separate the waters of the Kennebec from those of the St. Lawrence, the scanty remnant of provisions was divided among the companies, each of which was directed, without attempting to preserve any connexion with another, to march with the utmost possible celerity into the inhabited country. Whilst those who gained the front were yet thirty miles from the first poor and scattered habitations which composed that frontier of Canada, their last morsel of food was consumed. But, preceded by Arnold, who went forward for the purpose of procuring for them something which might satisfy the first demands of Nature, the troops still persevered in their labours with a vigour unimpaired by the hardships they had encountered, until they once more found themselves in regions frequented by human beings.

After a march of such unexampled fatigue, no further time was allowed for repose than was barely sufficient to collect the rear, which was greatly scattered, and to refresh the men, during which time the address, signed by General Washington, was published, and every assurance given to the people that they came to protect, and not to plun-

der them. The line of march was resumed, and on the ninth of November this gallant corps reached Point Levi, opposite Quebec.

The town was almost entirely without a garrison; and nothing could exceed the astonishment of the inhabitants. They would almost as soon have expected to see an army descending from the clouds, as emerging from the hideous wilderness through which this hardy detachment had made its way. Could Arnold have immediately crossed the St. Lawrence, and availed himself of their first consternation, it is believed to be certain that he might have entered the place without opposition; but a very high wind, and the want of boats, rendered the passage of the river impossible.

One of his Indian messengers, dispatched with letters to General Schuyler, had either betrayed him, or been intercepted; whereby intelligence of his approach was communicated to Colonel M'Lean, then at the mouth of the Sorel; and that experienced officer, trembling for the capital of the province, immediately determined to throw himself into it, and endeavour to defend it. In the mean time the winds, for several nights, continued so high as to render the passage of the river, in the canoes collected from the people of the country, and found on the southern bank, too hazardous to be attempted; and it was only in the night that the Americans could hope to cross, because

cause the Lizard frigate had anchored opposite the town, and three other armed vessels of smaller size were distributed in different stations, so as to guard the river for some distance above Wolfe's Cove. Armed boats were also employed to ply around the ships, and thus the passage of the river, even in the night, had become a very critical operation. Whilst the Americans were thus unavoidably detained, Colonel M'Lean, with his corps of emigrants, entered the city.

At length the wind moderated, and Arnold, leaving behind him about a hundred and fifty men to make ladders, determined to attempt the river. Eluding the armed vessels, and conquering a very rapid current, he, with infinite difficulty and danger, crossed over in the night, and landed the van of his little army about a mile and a half above the place, which is rendered so very memorable by the debarkation of General Wolfe in the year 1759. The rugged cliffs which continue on the northern bank of the St. Lawrence, for some distance above Quebec, being at this place absolutely impracticable, he marched down on the shore to Wolfe's Cove; and ascending with his band of hardy followers, the same precipice which had opposed such obstacles to the British hero, he, too, formed his small corps on the heights near the plains of Abraham.

The dangerous and difficult operations of cross-

ing the river in canoes, while the passage was so vigilantly guarded by ships of war, and gaining the almost perpendicular heights of the opposite shore, were completed by the advanced party, consisting of the rifle companies, soon after midnight. It was necessary to wait for the residue of the detachment, and in the mean time, a council of all the officers was held for the purpose of determining on their future measures. Lieutenants Humphries and Keith, of Morgan's company of Virginia rifle-men, who had been detached towards the town for the purpose of reconnoitring the enemy, reported that they had perceived the sentinels, who seemed alert at their posts, and who challenged them on their approach.

Neither this intelligence, nor the circumstance of their having, while on the river shore, fired into a barge making from the harbour to the Lizard sloop of war, nor the situation of his troops, who were neither properly supplied with bayonets, spears, or ammunition, deterred Arnold from proposing in council to march immediately against Quebec. He counted on surprising the place and finding the gates open.

But this opinion, which was not very earnestly pressed, was overruled. After having shewn themselves on Point Levi, and having fired from the northern shore into a barge which immediately returned towards the harbour, and after the report

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of their reconnoitring party, the expectation of finding the garrison entirely off its guard, was deemed too much against every probability, to be in any degree calculated on: yet subsequent information assured them that, notwithstanding these appearances, the gate called St. John's was then open, at which the town might undoubtedly have been entered. From some unaccountable negligence, no report was made to the Governor, by the crew of the boat which had been fired into, till the next day; and no suspicion was entertained that Arnold had crossed the river.

Though disappointed in the expectation of surprising Quebec, Arnold did not immediately relinquish the hope of obtaining possession of that important place. Not superior to the enemy in point of numbers, and without a single piece of artillery, or other implements for a siege, he was obviously incapable of acting offensively; but he flattered himself, that a defection in the garrison might yet put the capital of Canada into his hands. With this view, he paraded on the heights, near the town, for some days; and sent two flags to summon it to surrender. But the presence of Colonel M'Lean, an experienced and vigilant officer, and who was indefatigable in making arrangements for the defence of the town, restrained those measures which the fears of the inhabitants dictated. Deeming it unsafe to admit of any

communication with the assailants, he refused to receive the flag,. and fired on the officer who bore it. Intelligence too was soon obtained, that the first alarm was visibly wearing off, and giving place to other sentiments unfavourable to the hopes of the assailants. Fears for the vast property contained in the town, soon united the disaffected; and they were, at their own request, embodied and armed. The sailors too were landed, and placed at the batteries; and by these means, the garrison had become more numerous than the American army.

Arnold, whose numbers, after collecting those he had left on the south side of the St. Lawrence, did not now exceed seven hundred men, was in no condition to risk an action. In his laborious and almost unparalleled march through the wilderness, nearly one-third of his muskets had been rendered useless; and his ammunition was found, upon examination, to have sustained such damage, that his riflemen had not more than ten, nor his other troops more than six, pounds per man. In this hazardous situation he was informed, that abody of two hundred men, who had escaped from Montreal, were descending the river; and that M'Lean intended making a sortie from the town, at the head of his garrison, attended by some field pieces. Under these circumstances, he thought it most advisable to retire with his small party to Point Aux Trembles,

Trembles, twenty miles above Quebec, there to await the arrival of Montgomery. On their march, they saw the vessel on board which was General Carleton, and afterwards found that he had been on shore at Point Aux Trembles a very few hours before they reached that place.

In war, the success of the most judicious plans often depends on accidents not to be foreseen or controled. Seldom has the truth of this position been more clearly demonstrated, than in the issue of the expedition conducted by Colonel Arnold. The situation of the enemy conformed exactly to the expectations of the Commander in Chief. Not suspecting that so bold and difficult an enterprise could possibly be meditated, Quebec had been left entirely defenceless, and all the strength of the province had been collected towards the lakes. Could Arnold have reached that place but a few days sooner; could he even have crossed the river on his first arrival at Point Levi, before the town was entered by M'Lean; had Colonel Enos been able to follow the main body with his division of the detachment; or had the first moments after passing the St. Lawrence been seized; every probability favours the opinion, that this hardy and well-judged expedition would have been crowned with the most brilliant success. Had Arnold even been careful to relieve the inhabitants of the town from all fears respecting their property, there

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is much reason to believe, they would have refused to defend it. But although this bold enterprise was planned with judgment, and executed with vigour; although the means employed were adequate to the object; yet the concurrence of several minute and unfavourable incidents, entirely defeated it, and deprived it of that *eclat* to which it was justly entitled.

General Montgomery having clothed his almost naked troops at Montreal, which he garrisoned, and provided clothes also for those of Arnold; and having sent several small detachments into the country, to strengthen his interest with the Canadians, and obtain supplies of provisions, proceeded at the head of the residue of his army, amounting to about three hundred men, with his usual expedition, to join Colonel Arnold, at Point Aux Trembles, after which he marched directly to Quebec. But, before his arrival, Governor Carleton had entered the town, and was making every preparation for a vigorous defence. The garrison now consisted of about fifteen hundred men, of whom eight hundred were militia, and between four and five hundred were seamen. Montgomery's effective force was stated by himself at only eight hundred men. Relying more, for success, on the impression his past victories, and the opinion of his present strength, would make on the fears of the garrison, than on his actual force,

force, he, on his first appearance, addressed a letter to the Governor, magnifying his own resources, and demanding a surrender. The determination to hold no communication with the Americans was still preserved, and the flag was fired on. Yet he contrived means to send in a letter, in which he sought to alarm the fears of Carleton, and of the inhabitants, by representing the irritation of his victorious army at the injuries they had sustained, and the difficulty with which he restrained them; and in which he stated his perfect knowledge of the condition of the wretched motley garrison, and the impossibility of defending the place. But the determination of Carleton was taken; and the letters of the American General could not change it.

The situation of Montgomery was such as would have filled with despair, a mind less vigorous, less brave, and less sanguine than his. The intense cold had set in, and in that climate, in the winter, and in the open air, it is almost too severe for the human system, without all the aids usually provided against it. His raw, undisciplined troops, were unaccustomed to the hardships even of an ordinary campaign; and the terms of service of those who had accompanied Arnold, were expiring. His numbers were not sufficient to render success probable, according to any common principle of calculation; and the prospect of their being diminished by time, was much greater than

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of their being increased. But relying on their courage, on himself and his fortune, and on the fears of the garrison, stimulated too by the high expectations formed by all America of his success, and by the dread of disappointing those expectations, he determined to lay immediate siege to the town.

In a few days he opened a six gun battery within about seven hundred yards of the walls, but his artillery was too light to make a breach, and he did not calculate on any effect from it. His object was to amuse the enemy, and to conceal his real design.

Although the excessive hardships to which the troops were exposed, hardships which seemed to surpass human bearing, were supported with great constancy and firmness, Montgomery feared that they would at length yield to the force of such continued sufferings; and, as he would soon have no legal authority to retain a part of them, he apprehended that he should be abandoned by those who would have a right to leave him. Other considerations of a personal nature were, probably, not without their influence. Though he had embraced the American cause with enthusiasm, he had become wearied with its service. Trained to arms in a school where strict discipline and implicit obedience were taught and practised, all his habits, not less than his judgment, were shocked by the temper

per which the American troops brought with them into the field. A spirit of insubordination seemed to pervade the whole mass. Not only the quotas of different colonies, but in some cases even different regiments, appeared disposed to consider themselves as entirely independent of each other; and all thought themselves entitled to judge of the propriety of the measures to be adopted. The General himself possessed little other authority than was bestowed on him by his personal talents, and his arts of persuasion. Nor was a much brighter prospect opening for the future. The cause to which the extremity of the evil was to be attributed, threatened still to continue, and the United Colonies seemed still determined to rest their defence on temporary armies. With infinite judgment and address he had heretofore successfully struggled with the difficulties attendant on this unpromising state of things; but it is not unreasonable to suppose, that he was unwilling that his life and his fame should continue so much to depend on the wayward caprice of others. He had determined to withdraw from the army, and had signified, before marching from Montreal, his resolution to resign the commission which had been conferred on him.

It is not improbable, that the desire of closing his military career with a degree of brilliancy suited to the elevation of his mind, by the conquest of Quebec, and the addition of Canada to the United Colonies,

Colonies, strengthened those motives which were furnished by the actual state of American affairs, for a vigorous effort to terminate the war in that quarter. Impressed with the real necessity of taking decisive steps, and impelled by his native courage, this accomplished and gallant officer determined to risk an assault.

Of such materials was this little army composed that the most desperate hardihood could not hope to succeed in the purposed attempt, unless it should receive the approbation of all his troops. It was therefore necessary, not only to consult the officers individually on this delicate subject, but to obtain also the cheerful assent of the soldiers to the meditated enterprise. The proposition was at first received very coldly by a part of Arnold's corps, who were by some means disgusted with their commanding officer; but the influence of Morgan, who was particularly zealous for the enterprise, and active in advocating it, and who held up to them, as a very powerful inducement, the rights conferred by the usages of war on those who storm a fortified town, at length prevailed; and the assault was unanimously assented to.

Whilst the General was making the necessary preparations for that purpose, the garrison received intelligence of his intention from a deserter. This circumstance induced him to change the plan of his attack, which had been, originally, to attempt

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both the upper and lower towns at the same time. The plan now resolved on was, to divide the army into four parts; and while two of them, consisting of Canadians under Major Livingston, and a small party under Major Brown, were to distract the attention of the garrison by making two feints against the upper town, at St. John's and Cape Diamond; the other two, led, the one by Montgomery in person, and the other by Arnold, were to make real attacks on opposite sides of the lower town. After gaining possession of the lower town, it would have yet been extremely difficult to conquer the obstacles to be surmounted in forcing their way to the upper town; but as all the wealth of the city would then have been in their power, it was confidently expected that the inhabitants, to secure their property, would compel the Governor to capitulate.

Between four and five in the morning the signal was given, and the several divisions moved to the assault under a violent storm of snow. The plan was so well concerted, that "from the side of the river St. Lawrence, along the fortified front, round to the basin, every part seemed equally threatened." Montgomery, at the head of the New York troops, advanced along the St. Lawrence by the way of Anree de Mere, under Cape Diamond. The first barrier to be surmounted on this side was at the Pot-ash. It was defended by a battery, in which

which were mounted a few pieces of artillery, about two hundred paces in front of which was a block house and picquet. The guard placed at the block house being chiefly Canadians, having given a random and harmless fire, threw away their arms and fled in confusion to the barrier. Their terrors were communicated to those who defended this important pass; and the intelligence afterwards received by the American prisoners in Quebec was, that the battery was for a time absolutely deserted.

Unfortunately, the difficulties of the route rendered it impossible for Montgomery instantly to avail himself of this first impression. Cape Diamond, around which he was to make his way, presents a precipice, the foot of which is washed by the river, where enormous and rugged masses of ice had been piled on each other, so as to render the way almost impassable. Along the scanty path leading under the projecting rocks of the precipice, the Americans pressed forward in a narrow file, till they reached the block-house and picquet. Montgomery, who was himself in front, assisted with his own hands to cut down or pull up the picquets, and open a passage for his troops; but the excessive roughness and difficulty of the way had so lengthened his line of march, that he found it absolutely necessary to halt a few minutes, in order to collect a force with which he might venture to proceed. Having re-assembled about

about two hundred men, whom he encouraged alike by his voice and his example, he advanced boldly and rapidly at their head to force the barrier. One or two persons had now ventured to return to the battery, and seizing a slow match standing by one of the guns, discharged the piece, when the American front was within forty paces of it. This single and accidental fire was a fatal one. The General, and Captains M'Pherson and Cheesman, two valuable young officers near his person, the first of whom was his aid, together with his orderly serjeant and a private, were killed on the spot.

The loss of their General, in whom their confidence had been so justly placed, discouraged the troops; and Colonel Campbell, on whom the command devolved, but who did not partake of that spirit of heroism which had animated their departed Chief, made no attempt to prosecute the enterprise. This whole division retired precipitately from the action, and left the garrison at leisure, after recovering from the consternation into which they had been thrown, to direct their undivided force against Arnold.

The division commanded by this officer moved in files, at the common signal for the attack, along the street of St. Roques towards the Saint des Matelots. In imitation of Montgomery he too led the forlorn hope in person, and was followed by Captain Lamb, with his company of artillery, and a

field-piece mounted on a sled. Close in the rear of the artillery was the main body, in front of which was Morgan's company of riflemen, commanded by himself. At the Saint des Matelots, the enemy had constructed their first barrier, and had erected a battery of two twelve-pounders, which it was necessary to force. The path along which the troops were to march had been rendered so narrow by the rough cakes of ice thrown up on the one side from St. Charles, and by the works erected by the enemy on the other, that the two pieces of artillery in the battery in front were capable of raking with grape-shot every inch of the ground, whilst his whole right flank was exposed to an incessant fire of musketry from the walls, and from the picquets of the garrison.

In this order Arnold advanced with the utmost intrepidity along the St. Charles against the battery. The alarm was immediately given, and the fire on his flank commenced, which, however, did not prove very destructive. As he approached the barrier he received a musket ball in the leg, which shattered the bone, and he was carried off the field to the hospital. Morgan rushed forward to the battery at the head of his company, and received from one of the pieces, almost at its mouth, a discharge of grape shot, which killed only one man. A few rifles were immediately fired into the embrazures, by which a British soldier was wounded in

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the head, and the barricade being instantly mounted *, with the aid of ladders brought by his men, on their shoulders, the battery was deserted without discharging the other gun. The Captain of the guard, with the greater number of his men, fell into the hands of the Americans, and the others made their escape.

Morgan formed the troops, consisting of his own company, and a few bold individuals who had pressed forward from other parts of the division, in the street within the barrier, and took into custody several English and Canadian burghers; but his situation soon became extremely critical. He was not followed by the main body of the division; he had no guide; and was himself totally ignorant of the situation of the town. It was yet extremely dark, and he had not the slightest knowledge of the course to be pursued, or of the defences to be encountered. Thus circumstanced, it was thought unadvisable to advance further.

It had been found impossible to move on the field-piece which had been placed in front of the line, and the path was so narrow, that there was much difficulty in passing it. Only Morgan's company, and a few Pennsylvanians led by Lieute-

* Charles Porterfield, then a serjeant, and afterwards a Lieutenant-Colonel in the state garrison regiment of Virginia, who was killed at the battle of Cambden, was the first person who crossed the barricade; Morgan himself was the second.

nant Archibald Steel, and a few individuals of other companies, had made their way round it, and with the forlorn hope had entered the town. As the glow produced by immense exertion gave way to the cold, which was so intense that they were covered with icicles, and as the ardour excited by action subsided, when they were no longer engaged, even this daring party became less animated. While waiting in total ignorance of the fate of the residue of the division, the darkness of the night, the fury of the storm, the scattered fire still kept up by the enemy, principally in their rear, the paucity of their numbers, and the uncertainty concerning their future operations, visibly affected them. It was, after some deliberation, determined that they should maintain their ground, while Morgan returned to the barrier they had passed, for the purpose of bringing up the troops, who were supposed to be still on the other side of it.

They were soon joined by Lieutenant-Colonel Green, and Majors Biggelow and Meiggs, with several fragments of companies, so as to constitute altogether about two hundred men. Among the hazards which must for ever endanger the success of enterprises undertaken by undisciplined troops, especially in the night, it is one of the greatest and most certain, that no given portion of the force employed can be counted on. The most daring will precipitate themselves into the midst of danger.

whilst

whilst the less intrepid, or less ardent, will not be in a situation to support them.

As the light of day began to appear, this small but gallant party was again formed, with Morgan's company in front; and with one voice they loudly called on him to lead them against the second barrier, which was now known to be less than forty paces from them, though concealed by an angle of the street from their immediate view. Seizing the few ladders * brought with them, they again rushed to the charge, and on turning the angle, were hailed by Captain or Lieutenant Anderson, who was just issuing with a body of troops through the gate of the barricade, for the purpose of attacking the Americans, whom he had expected to find dispersed, and probably plundering the town. Morgan, who was in the front, answered his challenges by a ball through his head, and as he fell he was drawn within the barricade, and the gate closed upon the assailants, who received at the same instant a tremendous fire from the windows overlooking the barrier, and from the port-holes through it. Ladders were now placed against the barricade, and a fierce contest, and which on the part of the assailants was also a bloody one, was maintained for some time.

* Only Morgan's company had brought ladders further than the first barrier.

A few of the bolder among the front files ascended * the ladders under this deadly fire, and saw on the other side of the barricade double ranks of soldiers, who, with their muskets planted on the ground, presented hedges of bayonets to receive them, if they should attempt to leap to the earth. Exposed thus, in a narrow street, to a most galling fire, many of the assailants threw themselves into the stone houses on each side, which afforded them a shelter both from the storm and from the enemy; and through the windows of which they kept up an irregular and not very effective fire. One circumstance which greatly contributed to the irresolution now displaying itself, was, that scarcely more than one in ten of their fire-arms could be used. Notwithstanding the precaution of wrapping handkerchiefs round the locks, the violence of the storm had totally unfitted them for service. Morgan soon found himself at the barrier with only a few officers and a very small number of soldiers: yet he could not prevail on himself to relinquish the enterprise. With a voice louder than the tempest, he called on those who were sheltered in the houses to come forth and scale the barrier; but he called in vain; neither exhortations nor reproaches

* Lieutenant Heth, and the same Charles Porterfield, who had been before his Captain in forcing the first barrier, were of this number.

could

could draw them in sufficient numbers to the point of attack. Being at length compelled to relinquish all hope of success, he ordered the few brave men who still adhered to him to save themselves in the houses, while he, accompanied only by Lieutenant Heth, returned towards the first barrier, in order to concert with the field officers some plan for drawing off the troops. He soon met Majors Biggelow and Meiggs, to whom he proposed an immediate retreat by the same route along which they had marched to the attack. This proposition was assented to, and Lieutenant Heth was now dispatched to draw the troops from their present situation.

The barrier at which the Americans had been repulsed, crossed a street which continued in a straight direction for a very few paces, after which its course was changed. Whilst in view of the barrier the danger was very great, but on turning the corner it entirely ceased. Every person shewing himself in the street fronting the barrier was immediately fired at from the windows; and to draw the troops through this hazardous pass, was the duty now assigned to Lieutenant Heth. He undertook it with alacrity, and communicated his orders, with directions that the retreat should be made to the first barrier in small parties, and by single files, but was unable to prevail on the men generally to follow him. Their spirits had been

so entirely broken by the slaughter at the second barrier, by the pelting of the storm, and by the freezing cold, that only a few could be stimulated again to expose themselves in the street, and he was under the necessity of returning without accomplishing his object. By this time a party of the garrison, consisting of about two hundred men, with some field-pieces, had made a sortie from the palace gate; and Captain Dearborne, who was stationed with his company near that port as a rear guard, having surrendered to them, they were in perfect possession of that part of the town, and had completely encompassed the residue of the division. In this desperate state of affairs, a council of the officers then present was held, when the bold proposition was made *, to assemble immediately as many officers and men as could be instantly collected, and to cut their way back out of the town. The adoption of this daring resolution was only prevented by the suggestion, that the attack led by Montgomery, of whose fate they were entirely ignorant, might possibly yet be successful; and that in the event of his having entered the opposite part of the town, their co-operation might be of infinite value to him. On this account they determined to maintain still longer their present

* This proposition too was made by Morgan.

situation;

situation; but the force of the enemy increasing very considerably, they soon perceived that they were no longer masters of their own destinies, and were compelled, about ten o'clock, to surrender themselves prisoners of war.

In this bold and unsuccessful attack on Quebec, the loss on the part of the enemy was extremely inconsiderable. It is stated by General Carleton, in his letter to General Howe, at only one Lieutenant and seventeen privates killed and wounded. On the part of the Americans the loss was about four hundred men, three hundred and forty of whom were prisoners. It fell chiefly on Arnold's division, the whole of which, except a few officers who attended him to the hospital, fell into the hands of the enemy. As the sharpest part of the action was at the second barrier, the loss in killed and wounded was chiefly sustained at that place. It was less considerable than it otherwise must have been, in consequence of the cover afforded to a large portion of the troops by the houses they had entered, which not only sheltered themselves, but by keeping up an irregular fire on the windows of those houses, in which a part of the garrison was placed, lessened the danger of those who remained in the open street. Captain Hendricks, of the Pennsylvania rifle-men; Lieutenant Humphries, of Morgan's company; and Lieutenant Cooper, of Connecticut, were among the slain. Captains

Lamb * and Hubbard, [illegible] Steele and Tisdale were among the wounded. Not an officer was at the second barrier who did not receive several balls through his clothes, and some of them were severely scorched by the powder from the muzzles of the muskets discharged at them. When the dangers to which they were exposed are considered, it is matter of wonder that any of them should have escaped.

But the loss sustained by the American Army, which was most fatal to their hopes, and most deplored, was their General.

Richard Montgomery, whose short but splendid course was now terminated, was a native of Ireland, and had served with reputation in the late war; after its conclusion he settled in New York, where he married an American lady, and took a very strong and decided part with the colonies in their contest with Great Britain. His military reputation was high throughout America. In the history of his achievements, while commanding in Canada, we find much reason for attributing to him the qualities of an active partizan; and, so far as a judgment can be formed of a capacity for conducting the movements of a large army, from the

* Captain Lamb finding it absolutely impossible to advance with his field-piece, had abandoned it, and brought on his company to the second barrier, near which he received his wound.

judicious management of a small one, we cannot hesitate to allow him the talents of an able General. At the head of a small body of undisciplined troops, drawn from different colonies, unwilling to be commanded by a stranger, and jealous of him in the extreme; often disposed to disobedience, and anxious for their homes, whom he appears at length to have inspired with a large portion of the ardour and enthusiasm of his own mind, he conquered difficulties which not many would have ventured to meet, and till his last fatal moment was uniformly successful. With a few men just raised, and just about to disperse, badly furnished with arms, ammunition, and clothes, in little more than two months he made himself master of Canada from the lakes to Quebec; and as if determined to triumph over the climate itself, laid siege in the depth of winter to that important fortress. His measures seem to have been taken with judgment, and were certainly executed with great courage and unremitting exertion. When he appears to have risked much, and to have exposed his troops to hardships almost too great to be borne, this line of conduct was not capriciously or inconsiderately chosen: the state of his affairs absolutely required it, and without it a failure appeared to be inevitable. It was indispensably necessary to undertake the siege of Quebec during the winter, or to abandon altogether the great object of the expedition. With the

opening

opening of the river in the spring, it was not doubted that large reinforcements would arrive from England, and the place be effectually secured against any force America could employ for its reduction. The state of his army, which might soon disband itself, added to the excessive severity of the weather, made it extremely unsafe to trust to the tedious operations of a regular siege. Indeed the weight of his artillery did not admit of his making a breach in the walls, and there was no hope of compelling a surrender by famine. Nor was the attempt to carry the place by assault, so very rash a measure, as its great strength, and the event, might at first view induce us to suppose. The design was worthy the lofty spirit which formed it; though hazardous, it was not desperate; and though great courage was required to crown it with success, great courage was employed in its execution. He counted, and with reason, on the fears of the garrison, on the immense extent of ground they were under the necessity of guarding; and had he not fallen himself, or been deserted by his troops, it is even yet believed that he would have succeeded. The progress made by Arnold's division gives great countenance to this opinion; and some very intelligent officers belonging to that division, who, while prisoners in Quebec, endeavoured to inform themselves of the course of the action, aver, that when the General fell, the barrier had been

been deserted; and that the piece which did such fatal execution, was fired by a single remaining artillery-man, who immediately followed his comrades, and fled from the battery *. That no other gun was discharged corroborates this intelligence.

To express the high sense entertained by his country of his services, Congress decreed him a monument, with an inscription sacred to his memory, and expressive of "the veneration of the United Colonies for the late General Richard Montgomery, and the deep sense they entertain of the many signal and important services of that gallant officer, who, after a series of successes, amidst the most discouraging difficulties, fell at length in a gallant attack upon Quebec, the capital of Canada; and to transmit to future ages, as examples truly worthy of imitation, his patriotism, conduct, boldness of enterprise, insuperable perseverance, and contempt of danger and death."

The American army was no longer in a condition to continue the siege. At first they were extremely alarmed, and about one hundred set out for Montreal. With difficulty Arnold retained the others; but they broke up their camp, and retired about three miles from the city, where, though inferior

* This information was received from Colonel Heth, then a Lieutenant in Morgan's company, every individual of which, made distinguished exertions in this fatal attempt.

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in numbers to the garrison, they kept it in a state of blockade, and in the course of the winter reduced it to great distress for want of provisions. By preserving this bold countenance they retained the confidence of the Canadians, which saved their affairs for a time from total ruin.

Governor Carleton, who acquired, and deserved, great reputation by the fortitude discovered in defending Quebec, and who only wished to preserve the place till the reinforcements he expected to receive in the spring should enable him to act offensively, very prudently determined not to hazard an attack with a garrison on which it was unsafe to rely: and Arnold, on whom the command now devolved, remained undisturbed, except by occasional sorties made by small parties, which always retreated precipitately under their guns as soon as he advanced. Although badly wounded, he retained his courage and activity; and though deserted by those whose times of service had expired, so that his force was reduced at one time to about five hundred effective men, and no longer supported by the Canadians, he discovered no disposition to sink under the weight of adverse fortune.

Congress had been sanguine in the hope of annexing Canada to the Union, and had authorized General Schuyler, on his taking the command in the Northern department, to raise a regiment in

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that province. On the first intelligence of the difficulties experienced by Montgomery in re-enlisting his men, three of their members were deputed a committee to the Northern army, with power to concert with General Schuyler the means of reinforcing it, and to offer two months' pay as a bounty to those who would re-enlist, to be received on obtaining possession of St. John's and Montreal. Unfortunately the remedy was not applied in time, and the evil grew to such magnitude, that even Tyconderoga and Fort George were abandoned by the troops which had garrisoned them, whose terms of service had expired before others could be recruited to take their places.

It was determined to keep up in Canada nine battalions for the ensuing campaign, including one to be raised in that province, and General Schuyler was directed to have constructed at Tyconderoga, a number of bateaux for the purpose of transporting the troops to the scene of action. He was also directed to have the St. Lawrence, above and below Quebec, explored, in order to fix on proper places to oppose, by armed boats, or otherwise, an enemy attempting to enter the country by that river. To complete the nine battalions voted for this service, one from Pennsylvania, and one from New Jersey, were ordered to march immediately to Albany; two others were to be formed of the troops already with Montgomery; and the remaining number to

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be raised, one in Pennsylvania, and the others in New England and New York.

Whilst Congress were thus adopting means for the preservation of a colony believed to be already annexed to the union, the melancholy intelligence was received of the disaster of the thirty-first of December. The necessity of making great exertions now became apparent. It was resolved, that the utmost possible dispatch in forwarding reinforcements ought to be used, as well for the relief of their friends, as for the better security of the liberties, not only of that colony, but of all the United Colonies. Expresses were dispatched to expedite the battalions ordered from Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and the committee of safety in the former province was requested to obtain in Philadelphia a sufficient number of blankets to enable the men to move in that inclement season. The Colonial Governments were urged to use all possible means for raising, as speedily as possible, the battalions voted a few days before for Canada, and a bounty of six dollars, and two-thirds of a dollar, was allowed to each man who would enlist for that service, if furnished with a stand of arms, which was to remain his own property; and four dollars were offered to every person who would enlist without arms. The respective conventions, too, were requested to collect all the specie they could by any means obtain for the use of the Canadian

nadian army. These measures for reinforcing the Northern army were in some degree accelerated by having been anticipated by the Commander in Chief *.

The service in Canada was deemed of too much importance to be entrusted to Colonel, now Brigadier-General Arnold, or to General Wooster; and the health of General Schuyler would not admit of his proceeding to Quebec. General Lee, an officer standing high in the public opinion, was ordered to take the command of the army in that province. To remove the complaints respecting the want of heavy artillery, the government of New York was requested to supply him with cannon not exceeding twelve pieces, and one or more mortars, if to be had; as also with balls, shells, and other necessaries for the siege or assault of Quebec. But before General Lee could enter on this service, the opposite extreme of the union was so threatened by the enemy, that the destination of this officer was changed, and he was ordered to take command in the southern department. Brigadier-General Thomas, lately created a Major-General, who had commanded with reputation at Roxbury, and con-

* On the first intelligence received in the camp at Boston of the fate of Montgomery, General Washington, though extremely delicate respecting the assumption of power, without waiting for the orders of Congress, had immediately requested the New England governments to raise several regiments to reinforce that army. This measure was approved by Congress.

cerning whose military capacity a very favourable opinion had been formed, was appointed to Canada.

In the hope of exciting universally in that province the sentiments which prevailed through the United Colonies, and of forming with it a perfect union, Mr. Franklin, Mr. Chace, and Mr. Carrol, were deputed as commissioners, with full powers on this subject, and with instructions to establish a free press. Those commissioners were instructed to assure such people that they would be permitted to adopt such form of government as would be agreeable to themselves, to exercise freely all the rights of conscience, and to be considered as a sister colony, governed by the same general system of mild and equal laws which prevailed in the other colonies; with only such local differences as each might deem conducive to its own happiness. They were also instructed to enquire into the conduct of the American officers and soldiers, and to correct any irregularities offensive to the people, of which they might have been guilty.

Congress seemed to have entertained, respecting the Canadians, the opinion expressed by General Washington in a letter to General Schuyler, "that the province could only be secured by laying hold of the affections of the people, and engaging them heartily in the common cause." With respect to individuals who had suffered for their adherence to the Americans, they pursued the

the same magnanimous policy which had been adopted with regard to General Lee and others; they indemnified the sufferers.

In the mean time Arnold maintained, under all his difficulties, the blockade of Quebec. The reinforcements ordered by Congress, were of necessity slow in arriving. The great distance of the march, and the difficulty and delay in fitting the soldiers, (for the extreme severity of the winter in that cold region, made it impracticable even for those battalions which were already raised, and which on the first intelligence of the disaster of the thirty-first of December, had been ordered to his assistance,) to reach him till the spring. Aware of his critical situation, they were pressed forward in small detachments as fast as they could possibly be prepared; but such were the difficulties to be surmounted, that they could do little more than supply the places of the discharged, and keep up the shew of an army incapable of efficient service. From the first of January to the first of March, his effectives had never exceeded seven hundred, and had often been as low as five hundred men. In March reinforcements arrived in greater numbers, and the army was increased to a total of seventeen hundred; but many of them were sick. The small-pox had made its way into the camp, and every attempt to remove it was rendered ineffectual by the soldiers, who, disregarding all orders, procured themselves privately to be inoculated.

In order to render the blockade of Quebec in any degree effectual, this small army, which occupied the island of Orleans and both sides of the St. Lawrence, was unavoidably spread over a circuit of twenty-six miles, and divided by three ferries. About fourteen hundred of them were enlisted to serve only till the fifteenth of April, and no hope was entertained that they could be prevailed on to continue for a longer time. Under these circumstances the establishment of exact discipline was impossible. Great irregularities and waste of public stores prevailed; and, notwithstanding the earnest and explicit directions both of Congress and General Washington, continually enforced by General Schuyler, the Canadians were often injured and irritated. There is reason to believe that even General Arnold was disposed to think himself in the country of an enemy, and did not exert, in repressing those disorders, the same energy which he always displayed so conspicuously in the field.

The utmost exertions of Congress could not furnish a sufficient quantity of specie for this distant and expensive expedition; and as the consumption of provisions by the troops exceeded the supplies furnished by General Schuyler, whose attention to the complicated duties of his station was as incessant as it was judiciously directed, it was thought necessary by General Arnold, in order to pay for provisions, as well as for other services

rendered by the country people, to issue a proclamation, making paper money a currency, promising to redeem it in four months, and declaring those to be enemies who should refuse it. It will readily be imagined that the Canadians were unwilling to exchange their property, or labour, for this article, and that few would receive it but with reluctance.

This circumstance affected their attachment in no inconsiderable degree. They were likewise disappointed in the force brought by the Americans into their country, which was by no means such as they had expected. In addition to these causes of dissatisfaction, the priests, who possessed great influence over the mass of the people, and who were never, as a body, cordial in the American interest, had been, since the death of Montgomery, very injudiciously neglected, and had become almost universally hostile to the views of the United Colonies.

General Carleton, who was no stranger to the revolution which was taking place in the minds of the Canadians, entertained the hope of raising the siege by their assistance. A detachment of about sixty men from the garrison of Quebec landed twelve leagues below the town on the south side of the river, and were joined by about two hundred and fifty Canadians, who, under the command of a Mr. Beajeau, seized a provision-convoy de-

signed for the American camp. They were rapidly increasing in numbers, when they were suddenly and unexpectedly attacked by a detachment sent by Arnold, of about eighty men, under Major Dubois, who surprised their advanced guard, killed seven, wounded a few, and took thirty-eight prisoners; on which the main body dispersed.

The season of the year now approached when reinforcements from England might be expected with certainty; and notwithstanding the feeble state in which their army still continued, the Americans deemed it indispensably necessary, to recommence their active operations, and to renew the siege. They now again erected their batteries, and on the first of April, just as they were about to open them, General Wooster arrived from Montreal, and took the command. The next day the batteries were opened, but without much effect. They had not weight of metal to make a breach in the wall, nor an engineer capable of directing a siege, nor artillerymen who understood the management of the pieces. The few troops of this description originally belonging to the army were prisoners in Quebec.

The day after the arrival of Wooster, Arnold's horse fell with him, and so bruised the leg which had been wounded, as to confine him for some time to his bed. Believing himself to be neglected, he obtained leave of absence as soon as he

he was able to move, and took the command at Montreal.

Some fire ships had been prepared, both at Orleans and Point Aux Trembles, to be used against the vessels in the harbour so soon as the ice would permit the operation. The difficulties usually attending such an enterprise were greatly augmented by the want of sailors, and of a skilful commander to conduct them. The attempt, however, was made with great boldness, and the ship from Orleans very nearly succeeded. Coming from below, she was at first mistaken for a friend, and proceeded, in the night, very near the Cul de Sac, where the vessels lay, before her character was discovered. The fire from the enemy instantly opened; on receiving which, the train was immediately lighted; but the sails caught the flames so quickly, as to lose the benefit of the wind, and stop the progress of the vessel, just at which time the ebb tide commencing, carried her down the river. The American army which had been drawn up, prepared, if this plan had succeeded, to take advantage of the confusion it would occasion, had the mortification to witness its failure after the most sanguine and encouraging appearances.

A considerable part of the army having become entitled to a discharge, no inducement could prevail on them to continue in so severe a service. This deduction from Wooster's force was the more

sensibly felt, because the present situation of the roads, the lakes, and the St. Lawrence, unavoidably impeded, for a time, the arrival of the reinforcements destined for his aid. The roads were so deep as to be nearly impassable, the ice had become too soft for the use of sleds, and had not broken up so as to admit the passage of boats.

Among the first who reached the camp, after this state of things took place, was General Thomas, who, after being appointed to the command in Canada, had made great exertions to join the army. He arrived on the first of May, and on examining its force, found it to consist of a total of nineteen hundred, of whom not one thousand, including officers, were fit for duty. Among the effectives, three hundred who were entitled to a discharge, refused to do duty, and insisted importunately on being immediately dismissed. The sick were generally ill of the small-pox, in the hospital. This small force was still more enfeebled by being unavoidably divided, so as to occupy different posts which it had been deemed necessary to maintain, at great distances from each other, and on different sides of the St. Lawrence. In consequence of this division, it was impracticable to bring together more than three hundred men at any one point, which might be attacked by the whole force of the enemy. In all the magazines there were but one hundred and fifty barrels of powder,

powder, and six days' provisions; nor could adequate supplies from the country people be relied on, as the Canadians no longer manifested any disposition to serve them.

The river was now beginning to open below, and no doubt could be entertained but that the first moment of its being practicable would be seized by the enemy for the relief of this very important place. Amidst these unpromising circumstances, the hope of taking Quebec appeared to General Thomas to be entirely chimerical, and a longer continuance before the town both useless and dangerous. It was apparent, that the first reinforcements which should arrive would deprive him entirely of the use of the river, and consequently would very much embarrass the removal of his sick, and military stores. No object remained to justify this hazard.

Under these impressions, General Thomas called a council of war on the fifth of May, in which it was unanimously determined, that they were not in a condition to risk an assault, that the sick should be removed to the Three Rivers, and the artillery and other stores embarked in their boats, in order to move with the army higher up the river, to a more defensible position. On the evening of the same day certain intelligence was received, that a British fleet was below; and the next morning five of their ships, which had with much

much labour and danger made their way up the river through the ice, before it was deemed practicable, appeared in sight. They soon entered the harbour and landed some men, whilst the Americans were assiduously employed in the embarkation of their sick and stores; an operation carried on the more slowly, because the first appearance of the ships in the river deprived them totally of the aid expected from the teams and carriages of the Canadians.

At one o'clock Carleton made a sortie at the head of about one thousand men, formed in two divisions, and supported by six field pieces.

No intrenchments had been thrown up for the defence of the camp, and three hundred men with one field piece, constituted the whole force which could be brought into action. Thus circumstanced, victory was scarcely possible, and could have produced no important effect, as the enemy would immediately retire under the cannon of the town; while defeat would certainly annihilate the republican army. General Thomas, therefore, with the advice of the field officers about him, determined not to risk an action, and ordered his troops to retreat up the river. This was done with much precipitation, and many of the sick, with all the military stores, fell into the hands of the enemy. Unfortunately two ton of powder just sent down by General Schuyler, and five hundred stand of small

small arms, likewise augmented the booty of the captors.

Much to the honour of General Carleton, he pursued the wise and humane policy of treating with great gentleness the sick and other persons that fell into his hands.

The Fall of Richelieu had been contemplated as a place of great natural strength, which, by being fortified and defended by a few armed vessels, might, in the event of failing in the attempt on Quebec, stop the progress of the enemy up the river, and thus preserve the greater part of Canada. General Montgomery had strongly recommended an early attention to this position, and it had been determined to fortify it; but the measures resolved on had not been executed.

Some armed gondolas were building up the river, but had not been completed in time; and, in the present state of that place, it was entirely impracticable to maintain it.

The army continued its retreat to de Chambeau, where, on the seventh, another council was called, in which it was agreed that they should retire to the mouth of the Sorel. The ships of the enemy were pressing up the river, and were then at Jaques Cartier, about three leagues below de Chambeau, and, as they had no means of stopping them at the Fall of Richelieu, would soon be above, so as to subject the troops, in their present position, to the same disadvantages to which they had been exposed

posed before Quebec. In consequence of this advice, the remaining sick were moved up the river; but General Thomas was determined to continue in his present position some time longer, by the information that large reinforcements were now passing the lakes, and might daily be expected; but those reinforcements not arriving as his intelligence had induced him to hope, and the enemy advancing in force, he was obliged to retreat to the Sorel, where he was seized with the small-pox, of which he died.

The Americans in general were by no means satisfied with the conduct of this gentleman, to whom they in some degree attributed the disasters which ruined their affairs in Canada.

This censure, however, was unjust. He took the command of the army when it was too weak to maintain its ground, and when the time for saving the sick and military stores had passed away.

The siege of Quebec, instead of being persevered in longer, ought certainly to have been abandoned at an earlier period. This was the real fault of those who commanded at this station. It is to be ascribed to the extreme reluctance, always felt by inexperienced officers, to disappoint the public expectation, by relinquishing an enterprise, concerning which sanguine hopes have been entertained, even after every reasonable prospect of success has vanished, and to encounter the obloquy

loquy of giving up a post, although it can no longer be with prudence defended. In the perseverance with which the siege of Quebec was maintained, these motives operated with all their force, and they received an addition, from the unwillingness felt by the Americans to abandon those of their friends who had taken so decisive a part in their favour, as to be incapable of remaining in safety behind them.

Whilst the power of the United Colonies in Canada was thus visibly declining, and their troops were driven by superior numbers from the vicinity of Quebec, a calamity entirely unlooked for befel them in a different quarter of the same province.

As the English were still in possession of several military posts in Upper Canada, many considerations rendered it proper to station a body of troops above Montreal. A point of land called the Cedar, about forty miles above that place, which was recommended by the facility with which it might be defended, was selected for this purpose. It projected far into the St. Lawrence, and could only be approached on one side.

To this place Colonel Bedel had been detached, with three hundred and ninety continental troops, and two field-pieces, which he mounted in some slight works he had thrown up for security. Against this post General Carleton had, very early in the spring, planned an expedition, the execution

of

of which was committed to Captain Forster, who commanded at a post held by the English on Oswyatchie. He set out with a company of regulars and a few savages; and having prevailed on the warrior of a tribe of Indians inhabiting the intermediate country, to join in the expedition, he appeared before the works of the Americans with about six hundred men. Two days previous to his appearance, Colonel Bedel had received intelligence of his approach; and leaving the fort to be commanded by Major Butterfield, had proceeded himself to Montreal, to solicit assistance. Arnold, who then commanded at that place, immediately detached Major Sherburne to the Cedars with one hundred men, while he prepared to follow in person, at the head of a much larger force.

Captain Forster, on his first appearance, sent in a flag, requiring a surrender, and Major Butterfield offered to capitulate and give up the fort, on being permitted to withdraw with the garrison and all their baggage to Montreal. These terms were refused, and the assailants being entirely destitute of artillery, the fort was attacked with musketry. By this mode of attack no serious impression could possibly be made; and, in the course of two days, only one man was wounded. Yet Major Butterfield, intimidated by the threat, that if any Indians should be killed during the siege, it would be out of the power of Captain Forster to restrain them

them from massacring every individual of the garrison, consented to a capitulation, by which he and his whole party were made prisoners of war, stipulating only for their baggage and their lives.

The next day, Major Sherburne approached without having received any information that Butterfield had surrendered. Within about four miles of the Cedars he was attacked by a considerable body of Indians; and he, too, after a conflict of near an hour, in the course of which a party of the enemy gained his rear, surrendered at discretion.

Having obtained information of these untoward events, Arnold, at the head of seven hundred men, marched against the enemy, then at Vandreuil, in the hope of recovering the American prisoners. When preparing for the engagement, he received a flag, accompanied by Major Sherburne, giving him the most positive assurances, that if he persisted in his design to attack the enemy, it would be entirely out of the power of Captain Forster to prevent his savages from pursuing their horrid customs, and disencumbering themselves of their prisoners, by putting every man to death. This massacre was already threatened; and Major Sherburne confirmed the communication in a manner too serious to admit of its being questioned. Under the influence of this threat, Arnold desisted from his purpose, and agreed to a cartel, by which

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the prisoners were delivered up to him; he agreeing, among other things, to deliver others in exchange for them, and that they should immediately return to their homes. Hostages were given as a security for the performance of these stipulations; but Congress long discovered much unwillingness to observe them *.

At the mouth of the Sorel, after the death of General Thomas, reinforcements assembled, which increased the army to about four or five thousand men. General Sullivan now came up, and the command devolved on him.

The friendly Canadians in that part of the country, who had supposed themselves abandoned, manifested great joy on seeing General Sullivan arrive with reinforcements, which appeared to them very considerable; and offered every assistance in their power. He calculated on their joining him in very great numbers, and entertained sanguine hopes of recovering and maintaining the post of de Chambeau. As a previous measure, it was necessary to dislodge the enemy at the Three Rivers.

Carleton was not immediately in a situation to follow up the blow given the Americans at Quebec, and to drive them entirely out of the province; but the respite allowed them was not of long duration.

* Journals of Congress.

Towards

Towards the end of May, large reinforcements arrived from England and Ireland, so that the British army in Canada amounted to about thirteen thousand men. The general rendezvous appointed for these Troops was at the Three Rivers, a long village about midway between Quebec and Montreal, which receives its name from its contiguity to a river that empties itself, by three mouths, into the St. Lawrence. The army was greatly divided. A considerable body had reached the Three Rivers, and was stationed there under the command of General Frazer: another under General Nesbit lay near them on board the transports: a greater than either, with the Generals Carleton, Bourgoyne, Philips, and the German General Reidesel, was on its way from Quebec. The distance from the Sorel was about fifty miles, and several armed vessels and transports full of troops, which had gotten about five miles higher up than the Three Rivers, lay full in the way.

General Thompson, who had commanded the army after the illness of General Thomas, understanding the party at the Three Rivers to consist of about eight hundred men, partly Canadians, under M'Lean, had detached Colonel St. Clair, with between six and seven hundred men, to attack his camp, if it should appear practicable to do so with any probability of success. Colonel St. Clair advanced to Nicolet, where, believing himself not

strong enough for the service on which he had been ordered, he waited till he should receive further reinforcements, or additional instructions. At this time General Sullivan came up, and understanding the enemy to be very weak at the Three Rivers, ordered General Thompson to join Colonel St. Clair at Nicolet, with a reinforcement of between thirteen and fourteen hundred men, and to take command of the whole detachment, which would then amount to about two thousand. With this detachment, General Thompson was to attack the enemy at Three Rivers, provided there was a favourable prospect of success.

General Thompson embarked in boats provided for the purpose, and coasting the south side of what is called the lake St. Peter, where the St. Lawrence spreads to a great extent, arrived at Nicolet, where he joined Colonel St. Clair. Believing himself strong enough to execute the service consigned to him, as his intelligence respecting the enemy was contradictory, making them from five to fifteen hundred, he fell down the river by night, and passed to the other side, with an intention of surprising the forces under General Frazer. The plan was to attack the village a little before break of day, at the same instant, by a strong detachment at each end, whilst two smaller corps were drawn up to cover and support them.

Though this plan was well laid, and considerable

able resolution was discovered in its execution, the concurrence of too many circumstances was necessary to give it success. It is probable that so hazardous an attempt would not have been made, but for a resolution of Congress, stating the absolute necessity of keeping possession of that country, and their expectation that the force in that department would contest every foot of ground with the enemy. The troops passed the armed vessels without being perceived, but arrived at the Three Rivers about an hour later than had been intended; in consequence of which, they were discovered, and the alarm given at their landing. They were fired on by the ships in the river; to avoid which, they attempted to pass through what appeared to be a point of woods, but was in reality a deep morass three miles in extent. They were detained some time in these bad grounds, and thrown into considerable confusion. These delays gave General Frazer full time to land some field pieces, and prepare completely for their reception, while General Nesbit fell in their rear, and entirely cut off their return to the boats. They advanced to the charge, but were soon repulsed; and finding it impracticable to return the way they came, were driven some miles through a deep swamp, which they traversed with inconceivable toil, and every degree of distress. The British at length gave over the pursuit.

In this unfortunate enterprise, General Thompson and Colonel Irwin, second in command, with about two hundred men, were made prisoners; and from twenty to thirty were killed. The loss of the enemy was extremely inconsiderable *.

The whole military force in Canada now amounted to about eight thousand men; but of this, not one half were fit for duty. The rest were in hospitals, principally under the small pox. About two thousand five hundred effectives were with General Sullivan at the Sorel. The whole were in a state of total insubordination, much harassed with fatigue, and dispirited by their late losses, by the visible superiority of the enemy, and by the apprehension that their retreat would be entirely cut off. Under all these discouraging circumstances, General Sullivan formed the rash determination of defending the post at Sorel; and was only induced by the unanimous opinion of his officers, and a conviction that the troops would not support him, to abandon it a few hours before the enemy took possession of it. The same causes drew him reluctantly from Chamblee and St. John's; but he resolved to remain at the Isle Aux Noix till he should receive orders to retreat. He had been joined at St. John's by General Arnold, who had crossed over at Longueille just in time to

* Annual Reg. and MSS.

save

save the garrison of Montreal from falling into the hands of the enemy.

The Isle Aux Noix is a low unhealthy place, badly supplied with water, where the troops were so universally seized with fevers, as to compel General Sullivan to retire to the Isle La Motte, where he received the orders of General Schuyler to embark on the lakes for Crown Point.

The armed vessels on the Sorel and St. Lawrence were destroyed, and the fortifications of Chamblee and St. John's set on fire. All the baggage of the army, and nearly all the military stores, were saved.

The British army, during this whole retreat, had followed close in the rear, and taken possession of the different posts the Americans had occupied, immediately after they were evacuated.

On the Sorel the pursuit stopped. The Americans had the command of the lake, and the British General deemed it prudent to wrest it from them before he advanced further. To effect this, it was necessary to construct a number of vessels, which required time and labour. Meanwhile General Gates was ordered to take the command of this army, which was directed to be reinforced with six thousand militia. Of these, three thousand were to be furnished by Massachussetts, fifteen hundred by Connecticut, seven hundred and fifty by New Hampshire, and the same number by New York.

Thus terminated the enterprise against Canada. It was a bold, and at one period promised to be a successful effort to annex that extensive province to the United Colonies. The dispositions of the Canadians greatly favoured the measure; and had Quebec fallen, there is reason to believe the whole colony would have entered cordially into the union. Had a few incidents turned out fortunately, had Arnold been able to reach Quebec a few days sooner, or to have crossed the St. Lawrence on his first arrival; or had the gallant Montgomery not fallen in the assault of the thirty-first of December; it is probable the expedition would have been crowned with complete success. But the radical causes of failure, putting fortune out of the question, were to be found in the lateness of the season, when the troops were assembled, in a defect of the preparations necessary for such a service, and still more in the shortness of the time for which the men were enlisted. A committee of Congress appointed to enquire into the causes of the miscarriages in Canada, reported, "That the short enlistments of the continental troops in Canada have been one great cause of the miscarriages there, by rendering unstable the number of men engaged in military enterprises, by making them disorderly and disobedient to their officers, and by precipitating the commanding officers into measures which their prudence might have postponed, could

could they have relied on a longer continuance of their troops in service.

"That the want of hard money had been one other great cause of the miscarriages in Canada, rendering the supplies of necessaries difficult and precarious, the establishment of proper magazines absolutely impracticable, and the pay of the troops of but little use to them.

"That a still greater, and more fatal source of misfortunes has been the prevalence of the small pox in that army; a great proportion whereof has thereby been usually kept unfit for duty."

A committee was also appointed to enquire into the conduct of General Wooster, which acquitted him of all blame.

But had the expedition been crowned with the most complete success, the practicability of maintaining the country is very much to be doubted. Whilst General Montgomery lay before Quebec, and counted on obtaining possession of the place, he extended his views to its preservation. His plan required a permanent army of ten thousand men, strong fortifications at Jaques Cartier and the Rapids of Richelieu, and armed vessels in the river above the latter place. With this army, and these precautions, he thought the country might be defended, but not with an inferior force.

Experience has fully demonstrated the utter impossibility of keeping up such a force at that time,

at such a distance from the strong parts of the union. The want of specie alone, had there not been other causes powerfully co-operating with it, would have forced the Americans to evacuate the country, unless the Canadians could have been prevailed on to consider themselves as principals in the war, and to give paper money the same currency which it received in the United Colonies.

It seems then to have been an enterprise requiring means beyond those in the command of Congress; and the strength exhausted on it, would have been more judiciously employed in preparing to secure the command of the lakes and the fortified towns upon them.

CHAPTER VI.

Transactions in Virginia—Action at the Great Bridge—Norfolk evacuated and burned—Transactions of North Carolina—Action at Moore's Creek Bridge—Invasion of South Carolina—British Fleet repulsed at Fort Moultrie—Transactions in New York—Measures leading to Independence—Independence declared.

WHILST the war was carried on thus vigorously in the north, the southern colonies were not entirely unemployed. The Convention, which met at Richmond, in Virginia, proceeded to put the colony in a posture of defence. It was determined to raise two regiments of regular troops for one year; and to enlist a part of the militia as minute-men, who should encamp by regiments, for a certain number of days in the spring and fall, for the purpose of training, and should at all times be ready to march at a minute's warning to any part of the colony, for its defence.

Lord Dunmore, who was joined by such of his friends as had become too obnoxious to the people in general to be permitted to reside in safety among them, and by a number of slaves, whom he encouraged to run away from their masters, and whom he furnished with arms, was collecting,

under cover of the ships of war on that station, a considerable naval force, which threatened to be extremely troublesome in a country so intersected with large navigable rivers as the colony of Virginia. With this force, he carried on a small predatory war, and at length attempted to burn the town of Hampton. The inhabitants having received some intimation of this design, gave notice of it to the commanding officer at Williamsburg, where some regulars and minute-men were stationed; two companies of whom were detached to their assistance. Having marched all night, they reached the town in the morning, just as the ships had begun to cannonade it. This reinforcement throwing themselves into the houses near the water, and firing from thence with their small arms into the vessels, soon obliged them to retreat precipitately from their stations, with the loss of a few men, and a tender, which was captured.

In consequence of this repulse, his Lordship proclaimed martial law, and summoned all persons, capable of bearing arms, to repair to the royal standard, or be considered as traitors; and offered freedom to all indented servants and slaves who would join him. This proclamation made some impression about Norfolk; and the Governor collected such a force of the disaffected and negroes, as gave him an intire ascendancy in that part of the colony. A body of militia, assembled to oppose him,

him, were easily dispersed, and he flattered himself that he should soon bring the lower country to submit to the royal authority.

Intelligence of these transactions being received at Williamsburg, a regiment of regulars, and about two hundred minute-men, were ordered down, under the command of Colonel Woodford, for the defence of the inhabitants. Hearing of their approach, Lord Dunmore took a very judicious position, on the north side of Elizabeth River, at the Great Bridge, where it was necessary for the provincials to cross, in order to reach Norfolk, at which place he had established himself in some force. Here he erected a small fort, on a piece of firm ground, surrounded by a marsh, which was only accessible on either side by a long causeway. The American troops took post within cannon-shot of the enemy, in a small village at the south end of the causeway, across which, just at its termination, they constructed a breast-work; but, being without artillery, were unable to make any attempt on the fort.

In this position both parties continued for a few days, when Lord Dunmore, participating probably in that contempt for the Americans which had been so freely expressed in the House of Commons, ordered Captain Fordyce, the commanding officer at the Great Bridge, though inferior in numbers, to storm the works of the provincials. Between day-

day-break and sun-rise, this officer, at the head of about sixty grenadiers of the 14th regiment, who led the column of the enemy, advanced on the causeway with fixed bayonets against the breast-work. The alarm was immediately given; and, as is the practice with raw troops, the bravest of the Americans rushed to the works, where, unmindful of order, they kept up a tremendous fire on the front of the British column. Captain Fordyce, though received so warmly in the front, and taken in flank by a small body of men, who were collected by Colonel Stevens, of the minute-battalion, and posted on an eminence something more than one hundred yards to the left, marched up, under this terrible fire, with great intrepidity, till he fell dead within a few steps of the breast-work. The column immediately broke, but the British troops, being covered in their retreat by the artillery of the fort, were not pursued.

In this ill-judged attack, every grenadier is said to have been killed or wounded, while the Americans did not lose a single man. The next night the fort was evacuated. The provincial troops proceeded to Norfolk, and Lord Dunmore found it necessary to take refuge on board his vessels. He was followed by the most offensive of the disaffected, with their families.

After taking possession of the town, the American soldiers frequently amused themselves by

firing

firing into the vessels in the harbour, from the buildings near the water. Irritated by this, or some other cause, it was determined to destroy the houses immediately on the shore; and, on the night of the 1st of January, a heavy cannonade was commenced, under cover of which a body of the enemy landed, and set fire to a number of houses near the river.

A strong prejudice had been entertained, among the provincial troops, against this station. It was believed to be a very dangerous one, from which, if the enemy should be reinforced, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to escape; and they saw, with great composure, the flames spread from house to house, without making any attempt to extinguish them. It is not certain that they did not themselves contribute to extend them. After the fire had continued for several weeks, in which time it had only made slow progress, as the wind set against it, and had consumed about four-fifths of the town, Colonel Howe, who commanded a regiment of North Carolina regulars, which had come to the assistance of Virginia, and who had waited on the Convention, to press on them the necessity of destroying the place, returned with orders to burn the remaining houses. These orders were carried into immediate execution: after which, the troops marched from Norfolk

folk to the different stations which were assigned them *.

Thus was destroyed by far the most populous and flourishing town in Virginia. That part of the destruction, effected by order of the Convention, was produced by the fear that it would be held by the enemy as a permanent post, and the hope, that, after it was burnt down, the seat of war would be entirely removed from the province.

It was one of those ill-judged measures, founded on a course of false reasoning, to which the inexperienced are often exposed.

After Norfolk was laid in ashes, Lord Dunmore frequently changed his position, and continued a predatory war on the rivers, burning houses, and robbing plantations, which served only to distress a few individuals, and to increase the detestation in which he and his cause were held through the country. At length, his wretched followers, wearied with their miserable condition, and no longer willing to continue in it, were sent in about fifty vessels to Florida †.

As the war became more serious, the Convention deemed it necessary to increase the number of regular regiments from two to nine; six of which, in the first instance, and afterwards the remaining three, were taken into the continental service.

* Virginia Gazette. † Ann. Reg.

In

In North Carolina, Governor Martin, though obliged to take refuge on board a ship of war, in Cape Fear River, still indulged the hope of being able to reduce that colony.

A body of ignorant and disorderly men on the frontiers, styling themselves regulators, who were enemies to all government, had attempted, by arms, some time before the existing war, to control and stop the administration of justice. Having failed in this attempt, they had now become as hostile to the colonial, as they had before been to the royal government.

There were also in the province a large number of families who had lately emigrated from the Highlands of Scotland, and who, retaining their attachment to the place of their nativity, transferred it to the government under which they had been bred. From the union of these parties, who were bold, active and numerous, Governor Martin entertained sanguine hopes of making a successful struggle for the province. His confidence was much increased by the certainty that Sir Henry Clinton was coming on with a small party; and that Sir Peter Parker and Lord Cornwallis were to sail with a squadron, and seven regiments, early in the year, from Ireland, on an expedition to the southern provinces, and that North Carolina would be their first object.

To prepare to co-operate with this force, should it

it arrive, or, in any event, to make a great, and he hoped a successful effort, to give the ascendancy, in North Carolina, to the royal cause, he sent several commissions to the leaders of the Highlanders, for raising and commanding regiments; and granted one to a Mr. M'Donald, their Chief, to act as their General. He also sent them a proclamation, to be used on a proper occasion, commanding all persons, on their allegiance, to repair to the royal standard. Impatient to begin his operations, this was erected by General M'Donald at Cross Creek, about the middle of February, and about fifteen hundred men arranged themselves under it.

Upon the first advice that the loyalists were assembling, Brigadier-General Moore immediately marched at the head of a provincial regiment, with such militia as he could suddenly collect, and some pieces of cannon, to an important post, within a few miles of them, called Rockfish Bridge, of which he took possession; and, being inferior in numbers, he immediately intrenched himself, and took the necessary precautions to render his camp defensible. General M'Donald soon approached, at the head of his army, and sent a letter to Moore, enclosing the Governor's proclamation, and recommending to him and his party to join the King's standard by a given hour the next day. This invitation was accompanied with

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the threat, that he should be under the necessity of considering them as enemies, in the event of their refusing to accede to the proposition he had made.

Moore, knowing that the provincial forces were collecting and marching from all quarters, protracted the negotiation, in the hope that M'Donald might be completely surrounded. When, at length, it became necessary to speak decisively, he, in his final answer, declared, that he and his followers were engaged in a cause the most glorious and honourable in the world—the defence of the liberties of mankind; and, in return for the proclamation of the Governor, he sent the test proposed by Congress, with a proffer, that, if they subscribed it, and laid down their arms, they should be received as friends; but, if they refused to comply, they must expect consequences similar to those with which they had threatened his people.

M'Donald now perceiving the danger he was in of being enclosed, suddenly decamped, and endeavoured, with much dexterity, by forced marches, by the unexpected passing of rivers, and great celerity of movement, to disengage himself.

His primary object was to join Governor Martin, Lord William Campbell, and General Clinton, who had never arrived in this colony, and to penetrate with them the interior of the province; by which means it was expected that all the back

settlers of the southern colonies would be united in support of the royal cause, and the Indians be also induced to take up arms in their favour.

The provincial parties, however, were so close in the pursuit, and so alert in every part of the country, that he at length found himself under the necessity of engaging Colonels Caswell and Lillington, who, with about one thousand minutemen and militia, had intrenched themselves directly in his front, at a place called Moore's Creek Bridge. The royalists were greatly superior in number, but were under the disadvantage of being compelled to cross the bridge, the planks of which were partly taken up in the face of the intrenchments occupied by the provincials. They commenced the attack, however, with great spirit; but Colonel M'Leod, who, in consequence of the indisposition of M'Donald, commanded them, and several others of their bravest officers and men having fallen in the first onset, their courage deserted them, and they fled with the utmost precipitation in all directions, leaving behind them their General and several others of their leaders, who fell into the hands of the provincials *.

This victory was of eminent service to the American cause in North Carolina. It broke the spirits of a great body of men, who would have constituted

* Ramsay.—Gordon.—Ann. Reg.—Gazette.

stituted a very formidable reinforcement to an invading army; it increased the confidence of the provincials in themselves, and attached to them the timid and the wavering, who form a large portion of every community.

General Clinton, who was to command in the south, had left Boston with a force too inconsiderable to attempt any thing till the arrival of the troops expected from Europe. After parting with Governor Tryon in New York, he had proceeded to Virginia, where he passed a few days with Lord Dunmore; but finding himself too weak to effect any thing in that province, he set out for North Carolina, and remained with Governor Martin in Cape Fear till the arrival of Sir Peter Parker. That officer had sailed about the close of the last year from Portsmouth, to take on board some regiments stationed in Ireland; but had been detained so long, first by delays in that kingdom, and afterwards by contrary winds, that he did not arrive on the coast of North Carolina till the beginning of May. Fortunately for that province, the unsuccessful insurrection of M'Donald had previously broken the strength and spirits of the loyalists, and deprived them of their most active chiefs; in consequence of which, the operations which had been meditated by the provincials were, for the present, deferred. Clinton continued at Cape Fear, probably undetermined respecting his

future measures, till near the end of that month; when, hearing nothing certain from General Howe, it was determined to make an attempt on Charlestown, the capital of South Carolina *.

A letter from the Secretary of State to Mr. Eden, the royal Governor of Maryland, disclosing the designs of administration against the southern colonies, was fortunately intercepted in the Chesapeake early in the month of April; and thus South Carolina became apprised of the danger which threatened its metropolis. Mr. Rutlege, a gentleman of vigour and talents, who on the dissolution of the regal government had been chosen president of that province, adopted the most energetic means for placing it in a posture of defence. In addition to a great number of slaves belonging to non-associators who were impressed and brought in from the country for the purposes of labour, all ranks of citizens were employed on the works, and gentlemen of independent fortunes prided themselves on being among the first to use the hoe and the spade. The defence of Charlestown was strengthened, and a new fort, afterwards called Fort Moultrie, was constructed on Sullivan's Island, an advantageous position, from whence ships of war approaching the town might be greatly an-

* Ann. Reg.

noyed,

noyed, in which were mounted about thirty pieces of heavy artillery.

In the beginning of June the British fleet came to anchor off the harbour of Charlestown, and couriers were immediately dispatched by President Rutlege through the country, to order in all the militia of the colony for the defence of the capital. The streets were, in different places, strongly barricaded, and the stores on the wharfs, though of great value, were pulled down, and lines of defence continued along the water's edge *.

The British Admiral experienced some difficulty in crossing the bar; and although all their guns were taken out, and the vessels lightened as much as possible, the two large ships touched the ground, and struck several times on the way. This object being at length accomplished, it was determined to commence their operations by silencing the fort on Sullivan's Island †.

During the interval between passing the bar and attacking this fort, the continental troops of Virginia and North Carolina, who had been ordered to the assistance of their sister colony, arrived in Charlestown; and the American force collected at that point, amounted to between five and six thousand men, of whom two thousand five hundred were regulars. This army was commanded

* Ramsay.—Gordon. † Ann. Reg.

by General Lee, whose fortune it had been to meet General Clinton at New York, in Virginia, in North Carolina, and now at Charlestown. Viewing, with a military eye, the situation of the post entrusted to his care, Lee was disinclined to hazard his army, by engaging it deeply in the defence of either the fort or the town. The works on Sullivan's Island, though strong towards the water, were almost open in the rear, and consequently incapable of being defended against an attack by land, to which they were exposed, from the troops on Long Island, who might cross the creek between them, or from others who might be landed on Sullivan's Island. They also admitted of being raked by the guns of any vessels which might gain their western flank. He apprehended, too, that the ships would pass the fort, and station themselves out of the reach of its guns, between Sullivan's Island and Charlestown; and that the land-forces already on Long Island would cross over to the main land, and place the garrison in a situation of extreme hazard. The great solicitude, however, of the South Carolinians to maintain their capital, aided by the hope that a vigilant attention to the movements of the enemy would enable Lee to extricate his troops before they should be enclosed, at length prevailed; and he determined to attempt its defence.

Two regular regiments of South Carolina, commanded

manded by Colonels Gadsden and Moultrie, garrisoned Fort Johnson, on the northern point of James Island, and Fort Moultrie. About five hundred regulars, and three hundred militia, under Colonel Thompson, assisted by an eighteen-pounder and a field-piece, were stationed in some works which had been thrown up on the north-eastern extremity of Sullivan's Island, for the purpose of opposing the passage of the British from Long Island; and the remaining troops were arranged on Hadiell's Point, and along the bay in front of the town. General Lee remained in person with the troops encamped on the continent, at Hadiell's Point, in the rear, and to the north of Sullivan's Island. A bridge of boats had been commenced, in order to keep open the communication between Fort Moultrie and the main land, but had not been completed. His position was chosen in such a manner as to enable him to observe and support the operations in every quarter, and particularly to watch and oppose any attempt of the enemy to pass from Long Island to the continent; a movement which he seems to have dreaded more than any other.

Every preparation having at length been made, the fleet, consisting of the Bristol and Experiment, two fifty-gun ships; the Active, Solebay, Actæon, and Syren, of twenty-eight guns each; the Sphynx, of twenty guns; an armed ship of twenty-two

guns, and the Thunder bomb-ketch, weighed anchor, and sailed for the stations assigned them. The Thunder bomb, covered by the armed ship, took her station, and about half past ten began the attack, by throwing shells at the fort as the fleet advanced. About a quarter past eleven o'clock, the Bristol, Active, Experiment, and Solebay, brought up directly against the fort, and commenced upon it a most furious cannonade. The Sphynx, Actæon, and Syren, had been ordered to the westward, to take their station between the end of the island and Charlestown, partly to enfilade the works of the fort, partly to cut off, if possible, the communication between the island and the continent, and partly to prevent any attempt which might be made by fire-ships, or otherwise, to interrupt the grand attack. These vessels were, by the unskilfulness of the pilot, entangled in the shoals called the Middle Grounds, where they stuck fast, till it was too late to execute the intended service. The Actæon, being unable to get off, was scuttled and burnt next morning by the officers and crew, to prevent her falling into the hands of the Americans *.

The cannonade from the ships was incessant and heavy, but was not attended with the expected effect on the fort. This was attributable to its

* Ann. Reg.

form,

form, and the materials with which it was built. It was very low, with merlons of great thickness, and was constructed of earth, and a species of soft wood, common in that country, called the palmetto, which, on being struck with a ball, does not splinter, but closes upon it. The beds of the mortars, in the bomb-ketch, were loosened by being overcharged; and they soon became entirely useless *.

The fire from the fort was slow, was directed with great skill, and did vast execution. The springs of the Bristol's cable being cut by the shot, she was for a short space of time unmanageable; and was so raked by the fort, that at one time the Commodore is said to have remained alone on the deck. The Experiment was also roughly handled, and her Captain very dangerously wounded.

In the course of the action, all the powder in the fort was at one time expended, and for a short interval the guns were silent. Great hopes were then entertained of success; but these hopes were soon blasted by a fresh supply of powder, and a consequent recommencement of the same terrible fire under which the British ships had already so greatly suffered. The garrison united the cool determined courage of veterans to the enthusiastic valour of youth. General Lee crossed over to

* Ann. Reg.

them

them in a boat, during the action, to determine whether he should not endeavour to withdraw them, and was enraptured with the ardour they displayed. They assured him they would only lose the fort with their lives; and the mortally wounded breathed their last, exhorting their fellow-soldiers to the most heroic defence of the place.

Although the British troops had been landed on Long Island for the purpose of attacking the fort on the land side, no attempt was made to execute this part of the plan. Why it was not made, or whether, if made, it would have been successful, cannot be ascertained. General Clinton asserted that the water between the islands, which he had understood to be only eighteen inches deep, was in reality seven feet, and consequently impassable. This effect is said to have been produced by a long series of eastern winds.

The engagement continued till the darkness of the night compelled a suspension of it. The ships were by that time evidently in such a condition, as to be unfit to renew the action the next day. The Bristol had lost one hundred and eleven men; and the Experiment, seventy-nine. Captain Scott, of the one, lost his arm; and Captain Morris, of the other, was mortally wounded. Lord William Campbell, late Governor of the province, who served as a volunteer on board one of these vessels, was also mortally wounded: and both ships were

so

so shattered, as to inspire the hope that they would be unable to repass the bar. About nine o'clock they slipped their cables and moved off. A few days afterwards the troops were re-embarked, and all further designs against the southern colonies were, for the present, relinquished. The squadron sailed for New York, in pursuance of orders which had been given by Sir William Howe, while in Halifax, but which had not been received by Sir Henry Clinton till he had anchored off the bar of Charlestown.

The attack on Fort Moultrie was supported by the British seamen with their accustomed bravery, and the slaughter on board the ships was uncommonly great. The loss of the Americans, in killed and wounded, was only thirty-five men*.

Great and well-merited praise was bestowed, by his country, on Colonel Moultrie, who commanded the fort, and on the garrison, for the resolution displayed in defending it. Nor was the glory acquired, on this occasion, confined to them. All the troops that had been stationed on the island partook of it; and the thanks of the United Colonies were voted, by Congress, to General Lee, Colonel Moultrie, Colonel Thompson, and the officers and men under their command, who were engaged in repulsing the enemy on the twenty-eighth of June.

* Ann. Reg.—Ramsay.—Gordon.—And Letters of Gen. Lee.

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This fortunate event, for such it may well be termed, though not of much magnitude in itself, was, like many other successes attending the American arms in the commencement of the war, of great importance in its consequences. By impressing on the colonists a conviction of their ability to maintain the contest, it increased the number of those who resolved to resist British authority, and assisted in paving the way to a declaration of independence.

The Congress, which assembled in 1775, had adjourned with strong and sincere hopes that the differences between the mother-country and the colonies would soon be terminated to their mutual satisfaction. But the speech of the King, on opening the British Parliament, and the first proceedings of the grand legislature of that nation, demonstrated the fallacy of these hopes. Every arrival from Europe continued to bring additional intelligence of the inflexible resolution of the administration still to prosecute the war, and of the immense preparations making for the ensuing campaign. This information evinced the necessity of exertions equally vigorous on the part of America. The letters of the Commander in Chief respectfully, but earnestly, urged Congress to the adoption of measures which might enable him to give to the country that protection which was expected from its army. The government of the union was

not

not insensible of the importance of the crisis, nor indisposed to meet it with a competent force; but, unaccustomed to the great duties of conducting a war of vast extent, they could not estimate rightly the value of the means employed, nor calculate the effects which certain causes would produce. Large additional emissions of paper money was resolved on; and requisitions had been made, on the several colonies, for quotas of men sufficient to constitute a respectable army. But they relied too confidently on being able to call out, on any emergency, a force adequate to the occasion. They relied too much on the efficiency of such a force, and they depended too long on the spirit of patriotism which was believed to animate the mass of the people.

Under these impressions, the regular army for the middle colonies, which was weakened by ordering regiments, originally destined to serve in it, to the aid of the troops in Canada, was not recruited in time by additional requisitions; nor were those measures taken, which would fill the battalions actually ordered to be raised. It was not till the twenty-sixth of June, that the representations of the Commander in Chief could obtain a resolution, directing soldiers to be enlisted for three years, and offering a bounty of ten dollars to each recruit. In consequence of their adhering to a system of mistaken economy, soldiers were voted in greater

numbers than could be raised, and many of the regiments remained incomplete.

That zeal for the service, which was manifested in the first moments of the war, had long since begun to abate; and though the determination to resist became more general, that enthusiasm, which prompts individuals voluntarily to expose themselves to more than an equal share of the dangers and hardships to be encountered, for the attainment of a common good, was visibly declining. The progress of these sentiments seems to have been unexpected; and the causes producing such effects had not been sufficiently attended to.

General Washington, who had always conceived that the grand efforts of the royal army would be directed towards the Hudson, having left a small detachment, under the command of Major-General Ward, to complete certain works, designed for the security of Boston, hastened himself, immediately after the evacuation of that place, with the main body of his army to New York. He arrived there on the 14th of April, and continued, with unremitting exertions, the preparations which had been before directed for the reception of the enemy.

It was cause of some surprise to him to find that an uninterrupted intercourse had been kept up between the inhabitants and the British ships lying in the harbour: thus, not only the wants of the latter were abundantly supplied, but an evil of infinitely

finitely greater importance was incurred. Governor Tryon retained all the facilities he could wish, of communicating with the disaffected, who abounded in both the town and country, and of concerting with them plans of future operations. One of the first measures taken by the General was entirely to break off this dangerous and corrupting intercourse; in effecting which, he obtained the co-operation of the Committee of Safety for the colony.

The difficulty which had been experienced, in expelling the British from Boston, had strengthened the General's impressions concerning the necessity of preventing, if possible, their establishing themselves in New York; and had contributed to the determination of contesting with them, very seriously, the possession of that important place: this determination, however, it was difficult and dangerous to execute. The defence of New York against an enemy commanding the sea, if practicable at all, would require an army capable of meeting them in the open field, and of acting offensively, both on Long Island and on York Island. All the means, however, he could command, were employed in strengthening his position, and in endeavouring to prevent the ships of war from ascending the Hudson, or penetrating the East River, between Long Island and York Island. For this purpose, hulks were sunk, to obstruct the passage of ships, and the most advantageous posi-

tions on both sides of the North River, and of the narrow passage between the islands, were taken and fortified. The time which elapsed between the evacuation of Boston by General Howe, and the investing of New York, was most assiduously employed on these interesting objects, and in completing such works as would enable him to repel a direct attack upon the town.

Attention was also paid to the forts in the highlands. The importance of these passes had been discerned at a very early period of the war; and, as their possession was deemed almost indispensable to the success of the contest, exertions were made to render them defensible.

But the Commander in Chief observed, with infinite pain, the incompetence of his army to the great purposes for which it had been raised. His effective force was much below the estimate which had been made; nor was it in the want of numbers only that his weakness consisted.

The circumstances attending the commencement of the contest having been absolutely incompatible with an adequate provision of those military stores which are most essential in war, the troops actually in the field were by no means sufficiently furnished with arms, ammunition, tents, or clothes. The total want of magazines, connected with those false economical calculations which inexperience so frequently makes; had produced the regulation, requiring soldiers to supply themselves with arms.

There

There was not only an alarming deficiency* in this respect, but the guns actually in camp, for few of them deserved the appellation of muskets, were too inferior in quality to inspire those who used them with that confidence which arises from a consciousness of being equal to the enemy.

The army in New York, being thus manifestly incompetent to the defence of the middle colonies, was to be strengthened by requisitions of militia. In pursuance of this determination, a resolution was passed, to reinforce it with thirteen thousand eight hundred militia; of whom, two thousand were to be drawn from Massachussetts, five thousand five hundred from Connecticut, three thousand from New York, and three thousand three hundred from New Jersey. Whilst the grand army was employed in the defence of New York, the facility with which the enemy might land in great force on the Jersey shore, and penetrate into the heart of the

* Even the regiments of New England (where, more than in any other colony, arms were in the hands of the body of the people,) were very badly supplied with them; but those of the middle provinces, especially those of New York, were destitute of them to an alarming degree. In Colonel Ritzemer's regiment, a return of which was transmitted by the Commander in Chief to Congress, there were only ninety-seven muskets and seven bayonets. This was undoubtedly put as the extreme case, but a very great deficiency was common to all the battalions. The rifle regiments alone were in possession of fire-arms, which would enable them to render all the service expected from them.

middle colonies, was too apparent to permit that portion of the union to remain entirely unprotected. It was therefore resolved to form, in the middle colonies, a flying camp, to be composed of ten thousand men, to be furnished by Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland. The militia, both of the flying camp and of the army at New York, were to be engaged to serve till the 1st of December; and the Commander in Chief was empowered to form such magazines of military stores and provisions as he should deem necessary. He was also authorised to call on the neighbouring colonies for such additional temporary aids of militia as the exigencies of his army might render necessary; and as he well knew, that, if this power should be immediately exercised, it would be impossible to retain them in the field even till the occasion should render their service indispensable, he forbore to call them from their homes till the enemy should actually appear in force.

Great and embarrassing as were the difficulties already noticed attending the situation of the Commander in Chief, they were very much augmented by the disaffection of the inhabitants about the city of New York and the adjacent islands. A plot, to favour the enemy on their landing, and, as was understood, to seize and deliver up General Washington himself, had been formed, in which Governor Tryon, through the agency of the Mayor of New York, was believed

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to be principally concerned. This plot had extended to the American army, and even some of the General's guards were engaged in it. It was fortunately discovered in time to be defeated, and some of the persons concerned were executed. About the same time, a similar plot was discovered about Albany; and some executions there were also found necessary.

Hitherto the war had been carried on with the avowed wish of obtaining a redress of grievances. The utmost horror, at the idea of attempting independence, had been expressed; and the most anxious desire of establishing, on its antient principles, the union which had so long subsisted between the two countries, was openly and generally declared. But, however sincere the wish to retain a political connexion with Great Britain might have been at the commencement of the conflict, the operation of hostilities on that sentiment was infallible. To profess allegiance and respect for a monarch who was believed to be endeavouring, by force of arms, to wrest from them all that rendered life valuable, whilst every possible effort was making, by arms, to repel the attempt, began to be felt as an absurdity; and to maintain such a system was impossible. The human mind, when it receives a vast momentum, does not, like projectiles, stop at the point to which the force originally applied may have been calculated to carry it. A

variety of causes act upon it in its course. It is either checked, or an additional impetus is given to it; and it often takes a direction totally different from that at first designed. When the appeal was first made to arms, and the battle of Lexington was fought, a great majority of those who guided the councils, and led the battalions of America, wished only for a repeal of the obnoxious acts of parliament which had occasioned their resistance to the authority of the crown; and would have been truly unwilling to venture into the unexplored regions of self-government. Having imbibed, from education, strong prejudices in favour of the British nation and of the British constitution, they wished only to enjoy its substantial benefits. It is evidence of this temper, that Governor Eden of Maryland, and Governor Franklin of New Jersey, were permitted to remain in their respective colonies, till it was perceived that this moderation was abused by those characters, who availed themselves of it to act as spies for the public enemy. For some time, the King was still prayed for in the celebration of divine service; and in the proclamation of a fast, by Congress, in June, 1775, one of the motives for recommending it was, to beseech the Almighty "to bless our rightful sovereign, King George the Third, and inspire him with wisdom."

The prejudices in favour of a connexion with England,

England, and of the English constitution, gradually, but rapidly, wore off; and were succeeded by republican principles, and wishes for independence. Many essays appeared in the papers, calculated to extend these opinions; and a pamphlet, under the signature of "Common Sense," written by Thomas Payne, an Englishman, who had lately come over to America, had particular influence. He possessed a style and manner of saying bold things, singularly well-fitted to act on the public mind; to enlist every feeling with him; and, very often, especially in times when men were greatly agitated, to seize on the judgment itself. He boldly pronounced the further continuance of a connexion with England unsafe, as well as impracticable; and even ventured to attack, with successful ridicule, a constitution which had been deemed the master-piece of political workmanship. He was universally read; and, among those who were zealous in the war, obtained every where friends to the doctrine of independence. New strength was every day added to the opinions, that a cordial reconciliation with Great Britain had become impossible; that mutual confidence could never be restored; that reciprocal jealousy, suspicion, and hate, would take and hold the place of that affection which could alone render such a connexion happy and beneficial; that even the commercial dependence of America upon Britain was greatly

injurious to the former, and that incalculable benefits must be derived from opening to themselves the markets of the world; that to be governed by a nation, or a sovereign, distant from them three thousand miles, unacquainted with, and unmindful of, their interests, would, even if reinstated in their former situation, occasion infinite injury; and, in the present state of America, was an evil too great to be voluntarily borne. But victory alone could restore them to that situation, and victory would give them independence. The hazard was the same; and, since the risk of every thing was unavoidable, the most valuable attainable object ought, in common justice and common prudence, to be the reward of success. In such horror, too, was viewed the present war, and the principles on which it was believed to be conducted, that it was supposed impossible it could receive the support of a free people. The alacrity, therefore, with which the English nation entered into it was ascribed to a secret and dangerous influence which was, with rapid progress, undermining the liberties and the morals of the mother-country, and which, it was feared, would cross the Atlantic, and infect and contaminate the principles of the colonists likewise, should the ancient political connexion be restored. The intercourse of America with the world, and her own experience, had not then been sufficient to teach her the important truth, that the many,

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as often as the few, are blind to the rights of others, when conflicting with their own interests, and can madly pursue injustice, without perceiving that they are in the wrong. That they, too, not unfrequently close their eyes against the light, and shut their ears against the plainest evidence and the most conclusive reasoning.

It was also urged, and with great reason, that foreign aid could more certainly be obtained, if the effect of that aid would be the dismemberment of the British empire, than if no such important inducement should be held out to the rivals of that nation.

American independence became the general theme of conversation, and, more and more, the general wish. This sentiment was increased, by learning that they were declared to be in a state of rebellion; that foreign mercenaries were to be employed against them; that the tomahawk and scalping knife were to be engaged in the British service; and that their slaves were to be seduced from their masters, and armed against them.

The measures of Congress took their complexion from the temper of the people. Their proceedings against the disaffected became more and more vigorous; their language respecting the British government was less the language of subjects, and more calculated to turn the public attention towards Congress, and the Provincial Assemblies,

as the sole and ultimate rulers of the country. General letters of marque and reprisal were granted; and the American ports were opened to all nations and people not subject to the British crown.

At length a measure was adopted, which was considered by Congress, and by America in general, as decisive of the question of independence. Hitherto, it had been recommended to particular colonies, to establish temporary institutions for the conduct of their affairs, during the existence of the contest; but now, a resolution was offered, recommending generally, without limitation of time, to such colonies as had not already established them, the adoption of governments adequate to the exigency. Mr. John Adams, Mr. Rutlege, and Mr. Richard Henry Lee, all zealous advocates for independence, were appointed a committee to prepare a proper preamble to the resolution. The report of these gentlemen was agreed to in these words: "Whereas his Britannic Majesty, in conjunction with the Lords and Commons of Great Britain, has, by a late act of parliament, excluded the inhabitants of these United Colonies from the protection of his crown; and whereas no answer whatever to the humble petitions of the colonies, for redress of grievances and reconciliation with Great Britain, has been, or is likely to be, given; but the whole force of that kingdom, aided by foreign mercenaries, is to be exerted for the destruction

struction of the good people of these colonies; and whereas it appears absolutely irreconcileable to reason and good conscience, for the people of these colonies now to take the oaths and affirmations necessary for the support of any government under the crown of Great Britain; and it is necessary that the exercise of every kind of authority, under the said crown, should be totally suppressed, and all the powers of government exerted under the authority of the people of the colonies, for the preservation of internal peace, virtue, and good order, as well as for the defence of their lives, liberties, and properties, against the hostile invasions and cruel depredations of their enemies: therefore, resolved, That it be recommended to the respective Assemblies and Conventions of the United Colonies, where no government sufficient for the exigencies of their affairs hath been already established, to adopt such government as shall, in the opinion of the representatives of the people, best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents in particular, and America in general."

The Provincial Assemblies and Conventions acted on this recommendation, and governments were generally established. In Connecticut and Rhode-Island it was deemed unnecessary to make any change in their actual situation, because, in these colonies, the executive, as well as the whole legislature, had always been elected by themselves.

In Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York, some hesitation was, at first, discovered; and the Assemblies appeared unwilling to take so decisive a step. The public opinion, however, was in favour of it, and at length prevailed.

The several colonies, now contemplating themselves as sovereign states, and mingling with the arduous duty of providing means to repel a powerful enemy, the important and interesting labour of forming governments for themselves and their posterity, exhibited the novel spectacle of matured and enlightened societies, uninfluenced by external or internal force, devising, according to their own judgments, political systems for their own government.

With the exceptions, already stated, of Connecticut and Rhode Island, whose systems had ever been in a high degree democratic, the novel principle of limiting the constituted authorities, by the creation of a written constitution, prescribing bounds not to be transcended by the legislature itself, was every where adopted.

The solid foundations for a popular government were already laid in all the colonies. The institutions received from England were admirably well calculated to prepare the way for a temperate and rational republic, and had accustomed them to the election of representatives, to compose the most numerous branch of the legislature; and, in some instances,

instances, of the second, or less numerous branch also. No hereditary powers had ever existed; and every authority had been derived either from the people or the king. The powers of the crown being no longer acknowledged, the people remained the only source of legitimate authority. The materials in their possession, as well as their habits of thinking, were adapted only to governments in all respects representative; and such governments were universally adopted. Under various modifications and varieties, produced in a great degree by former habits, the same great principles were established. In general, the legislative, executive, and judicial departments were rendered distinct, with the apparent intention of making them independent of each other in a very considerable degree. The legislature was divided into two branches, and all persons holding offices of profit or trust excluded from it. The executive, too, was constituted by election, and a strong jealousy of its powers was every where manifested. The judges received their appointments from the legislature, or executive; and, in most instances, held their offices during good behaviour.

These great principles formed the common basis of the American republics. There were, however, some exceptions to them. In some of the states the legislature consisted of a single branch; and, in some of them, the tenure of judicial office was

for a term of years; and in Connecticut and Rhode Island, where the antient institutions were preserved, they continued to be elected by the people, annually, and formed one branch of the legislature.

Various, too, were the qualifications required to confer the privilege of an elector, or of being elected; and the second branch of the legislature was variously constructed. In some states a greater, and in others a less effort, was discernible, to make it an effectual check on the more popular branch, either by prolonging the time for which its members were elected, or requiring different qualifications from those who should elect; and, in some instances, by even permitting them to fill up, by their own act, vacancies created in their body during the time for which it had been constituted.

In constructing the executive, too, great varieties appeared. In some instances the Governor was elected, and was eligible for a longer, in others for a shorter term; in some states he was invested with a negative on the laws, which in others was refused him; and with power to make appointments, which more generally was exercised by the legislature. In some instances he acted according to his own judgment, and in others was divested of all responsibility, by being placed under the absolute control of an executive council.

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In general, however, the antient institutions were preserved, so far as was compatible with the abolition of regal authority.

The Provincial Assemblies, under the influence of Congress, took up the question of independence; and, in some instances, authorized their representatives, in the great national council, to enter into foreign alliances. Except Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New York, they were in favour of a total and immediate separation from Great Britain, and gave instructions to their representatives conforming to this opinion. Measures had been taken to ascertain the sense of the people respecting it, which was expressed in instructions to their representatives in the Colonial assemblies, and was generally in favour of it. "The time was," said the people of the town of Malden *, in Massachussetts, "when we loved the King and the people of Great Britain with an affection truly filial; we felt ourselves interested in their glory; we shared in their joys and sorrows; we cheerfully poured the fruit of all our labours into the lap of our mother-country, and, without reluctance, expended our blood and our treasure in her cause.

"These were our sentiments towards Great Britain, while she continued to act the part of a parent state; we felt ourselves happy in our connexion

* Gazette.

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with her, nor wished it to be dissolved. But our sentiments are altered. It is now the ardent wish of our souls that America may become a free and independent state."

The inhabitants of Boston, ever forward and zealous in the contest, concluded, in their instructions, a recapitulation of the existing causes of durable animosity, and of the hazards of restoring the past connexion, with saying, "We therefore think it almost impracticable for these colonies to be ever again subject to, or dependent upon, Great Britain, without endangering the very existence of the state. Placing, however, unbounded confidence in the supreme councils of the Congress, we are determined to wait, most patiently to wait, till their wisdom shall dictate the necessity of making a declaration of independence. Nor should we have ventured to express our sentiments upon the subject, but from the presumption that Congress would choose to feel themselves supported by the people of each colony, before they adopt a resolution so interesting to the whole. The inhabitants of this town, therefore, unanimously instruct and direct you, that, at the approaching session of the General Assembly, you use your endeavours, that the delegates of this colony, in Congress, be advised, that, in case the Congress shall think it necessary, for the safety of the United Colonies, to declare them independent of Great Britain, the inhabitants of this colony, with their

their lives and the remnant of their fortunes, will most chearfully support them in that measure *."

The people of the other parts of the same province, and in the other colonies generally, manifested the same spirit, and expressed the same sentiments. In South Carolina they were particularly ardent; and, in Virginia, the public sense was so decisive on the subject, that the Convention not only instructed their representatives to move the resolution in the grand council of the continent, but declared that colony an independent state, before the measure was sanctioned by Congress.

The public opinion having manifested itself in favour of independence, the great and decisive step was determined on; and the following resolution was moved by Richard Henry Lee, and seconded by John Adams: "Resolved, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain, is, and ought to be, totally dissolved."

This resolution was referred to a committee of the whole Congress, where it was daily debated. All the colonies, except Pennsylvania and Maryland, had expressed their approbation of the measure, and no doubt was entertained of its adoption: but it was thought prudent to suspend a decision

* Gazette.

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on it till the acquiescence of those colonies in the measure should render its adoption unanimous *. Great exertions were made in both, by the strong friends of this resolution, who availed themselves of the apprehension, that those who did not join in this last and greatest step, would be excluded from the union; and, at length, instructions were received from the conventions of those provinces also, directing their representatives to assent to it.

The resolution was now unanimously agreed to; and the declaration, which had been already prepared by a committee appointed for that purpose, was taken into consideration, and, after several amendments, received the sanction of the whole Congress.

This important paper commenced with stating, that "When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the

* While this vote was depending, resolutions were entered into by Congress, declaring that all persons residing within, or passing through, any one of the United Colonies, owed allegiance to the government thereof; and that any such person, who should levy war against any of the United Colonies, or adhere to the King of Great Britain, or other enemies of the said colonies, or any of them, should be guilty of treason; and it was recommended to the several legislatures to pass laws for their punishment.

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earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature, and of Nature's God, entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to the separation *."

The causes are then stated, and a long enumeration of the oppressions, complained of by America, is closed with saying, "A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people."

The fruitless appeals which had been made to the people of Great Britain, are also recounted; but "they, too," concludes this declaration, "have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we would the rest of mankind, enemies in war—in peace, friends.

"We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that

* Mr. Jefferson, Mr. John Adams, Mr. Franklin, Mr. Sherman, and Mr. R. R. Livingston, were appointed to prepare this declaration; and the draft reported by the committee has been generally attributed to Mr. Jefferson.

these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown; and that all political connexion between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and do all other acts and things which independent states may, of right, do. And, for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour *."

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* The names of the members, who subscribed the declaration of independence, were as follow, viz.

New Hampshire	Josiah Bartlett William Whipple Matthew Thornton
Massachussetts' Bay	Samuel Adams John Adams Robert Treat Paine Elbridge Gerry
Rhode Island, &c.	Stephen Hopkins William Ellery
Connecticut	Roger Sherman Samuel Huntington William Williams Oliver Wolcott
New York	William Floyd Philip Livingston Francis Lewis Lewis Morris
New Jersey	Richard Stockton John Witherspoon Francis Hopkinson John Hart Abram Clark
Pennsylvania	Robert Morris Benjamin Rush Benjamin Franklin John Morton George Clymer James Smith George Taylor James Wilson George Ross
Delaware	Cæsar Rodney George Read
Maryland	Samuel Chase William Paca Thomas Stone Charles Caroll, of Carollton
Virginia	George Wythe Richard Henry Lee Thomas Jefferson Benjamin Harrison Thomas Nelson, jun. Francis Lightfoot Lee Carter Braxton

North

This declaration was immediately communicated to the armies, where it was received with enthusiasm. It was also proclaimed throughout the United States, and gave to the people very general joy. Some individuals, however, who had been very zealous supporters for all measures which had for their object only a redress of grievances, and in whose bosoms the hope of accommodation still lingered, either too timid to meet the arduous conflict which this measure rendered, in their estimation, certain and inevitable, or sincerely believing that the happiness of America would be best consulted by preserving their political connexion with Great Britain, viewed the dissolution of that connexion with anxious regret; and others, who afterwards deserted the American cause, which they had at first embraced, attributed their defection to this measure. It was also an unfortunate truth, that in the whole country, between New England and the Potomac, which was now to become the great theatre of action, although the majority was in favour of independence, yet there existed a formidable minority, who not only refused to act with their countrymen, but were ready to give the enemy every aid in their power.

North Carolina	William Hooper Joseph Hewes John Penn	South Carolina	Thomas Lynch, jun. Arthur Middleton
South Carolina	Edward Rutlege Thos. Heyward, jun.	Georgia	Button Gwinnett Lyman Hall George Walton.

It cannot, however, be questioned, that the declaration of independence was wise, and well timed; and that, since the continuance of the war was inevitable, every principle of sound policy required that the avowed characters of the parties should be changed; and that it should no longer be denominated, or considered, a war between a sovereign and his acknowledged subjects.

CHAPTER VII.

Lord and Sir William Howe arrive before New York—Circular Letter of Lord Howe—State of the American Army—The British land in force on Long Island—Battle of Brooklyn—Evacuation of Long Island—Fruitless Negotiations—New York evacuated.

ON evacuating Boston, General Howe had retired to Halifax. He seems to have intended there to wait the large reinforcements expected from England, and not to approach his adversary till he should be in a condition to act offensively, and with such success as would make a very serious impression. But the situation of his army in that place was so uncomfortable, and the delays in the arrival of the troops from Europe were so great, that he at length resolved, with the forces already under his command, to sail for New York, in some of the islands on the sea coast of which, it would be in his power to take a station of perfect security, till he should be strong enough to commence the great plan of operations which was contemplated.

This measure was recommended by several considerations. His troops would there receive plentiful supplies of fresh provisions; he would be enabled to ascertain, with more precision, the

dependence to be placed on the inhabitants; and, in the meantime, to make those preparations which would facilitate his plan for opening the campaign with vigour, so soon as his whole army should be collected.

In the latter end of June he arrived off Sandy Hook, in the Greyhound; and, on the twenty-ninth of that month, the first division of the fleet from Halifax reached the same place. The rear division soon followed, and, having passed the Narrows, landed the troops on Staten Island, where General Washington had placed only a small military force, for the purpose of collecting and driving off such stock as might otherwise supply the invading army with fresh provisions. Here they were received with great demonstrations of joy by the inhabitants, who took the oaths of allegiance to the British crown, and embodied themselves under the authority of the late Governor Tryon, for the defence of the island. Strong assurances were also received from Long Island, and the neighbouring parts of New Jersey, of the favourable dispositions of a great proportion of the people to the royal cause. On Staten Island, General Howe resolved to wait till his army should be in full force, unless circumstances should require a change of system.

Foreseeing the distress which would be occasioned to the enemy, by cutting off those sup-

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plies of fresh provisions which would be particularly useful on their first landing, General Washington had urged the different committees to co-operate with him in removing the stock and grain in the small islands near the coast; which, if permitted to remain, would inevitably fall into their hands: but this wise precaution had been only in part executed, and General Howe soon obtained partial supplies for himself and army.

The effect with which the British arms had been opposed in New England, had demonstrated to administration the very serious complexion of the war, and the necessity of employing in it a force vastly more considerable than they had originally supposed could possibly be required. In addition, therefore, to the national troops, they had subsidized about thirteen thousand Hessians and Waldeckers; and it was also determined to employ a powerful fleet in this important service *.

As had been foreseen by General Washington, the great effort was now to be made on the Hudson. A variety of considerations suggested the policy of transferring the seat of war to this part of the continent. Such is the formation of the country on the sea coast, being divided into islands assailable in every direction by a maritime force, that it requires for defence, against a con-

* Ann. Reg.

joint attack by land and water, not only complete fortifications, but a very formidable army also. The same causes which render this part of the United States so vulnerable to an invading enemy, commanding the sea, secure that enemy in the possession of it, after it has been acquired. It must always be found extremely difficult to drive even an inferior army from this post, without first obtaining a naval superiority.

The British General was invited to New York, not only by the facility with which that position could be taken and retained, but by the great and superior advantages it offered in the prosecution of the war. Long Island, of the secure possession of which he could not entertain a doubt, unless his force should be insufficient to make any impression whatever on America, was a fertile country, abounding in provisions, and would of itself furnish large supplies to his army. From this post, too, it was optional with him to carry the war eastwardly, into New England; northwardly, into the state of New York; or, westwardly, into the Jerseys and Pennsylvania; or, if too weak to attempt the conquest of either, he could retire into a place of security, and either harass the American army and the adjacent country, or carry on expeditions against distant parts of the continent. In fact, it enabled him to command perfectly his own operation, and to choose the scene of action.

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The possession of the Hudson, too, would open to him the most direct communication with Canada, and enable him very greatly to interrupt the intercourse between the eastern and southern states. In addition to these circumstances, he would cover his friends, who, in turn, would recruit his army, and supply it with those necessaries, the want of which he had so severely experienced in Boston.

The command of the fleet destined for this service, was entrusted to Lord Howe, the brother of the General; and they were both constituted Commissioners for restoring peace to the colonies, and granting pardons, with such exceptions as they should think proper to make. Lord Howe, who had been detained some time in England, soliciting an enlargement of his powers as Commissioner, arrived at Halifax about a fortnight after his brother had left that place, and lost no time in proceeding after him to Staten Island, which he reached the twelfth of July *.

General Washington soon received evidence of the difficulty attending his efforts to preserve this important river from an enemy possessing so powerful a fleet as was now to act against him. Two frigates passed his batteries, without injury, and sailed up towards the high lands; the passes of which were of essential importance, and were very

* Ann. Reg.

weakly

weakly defended. It was apprehended that on board these frigates might be a small body of troops, and arms for the numerous disaffected of that country, with whose aid, sudden possession might be taken of these important positions. It was impossible still further to weaken the army at New York, for the defence of these passes, and therefore the militia were called upon to maintain them. The frigates, however, did not make the attempt which was apprehended from them; but, by retaining this station, they cut off the communication, by water, between the army at New York and that at Ticonderoga. To remove this interruption, a plan was formed to set the frigates on fire, by means of a fire-ship. This plan, though considerable address and courage were manifested in the attempt, failed in the execution; and only a tender was burnt. The frigates returned, but this fact demonstrated a truth which the General had before believed, that a ship with a fair wind would pass his batteries at pleasure, unless stopped before them by obstacles in the channel.

Notwithstanding the declaration of independence had now been made, Lord Howe determined, while the troops from Europe were arriving, to try the influence of the powers for pacification which had been committed to him. He sent on shore, by a flag, a circular letter, dated off the coast of Massachussetts, addressed severally to the late

late Governors under the crown, enclosing a declaration, which he requested them to make public; and which announced to the people his authority to grant pardons to any number or description of persons, who, during the tumult and disasters of the times, might have deviated from their just allegiance; and who might be willing, by a speedy return to their duty, to reap the benefits of the royal favour; and to declare any colony, town, post, or place, in the peace and under the protection of the crown, and excepted from the penal provisions of the act of parliament, prohibiting all trade and intercourse with the colonies. This letter also contained assurances, that the meritorious services of all persons who should aid and assist in restoring public tranquillity in the colonies, or in any parts thereof, would be duly considered.

These papers were immediately transmitted by the Commander in Chief to Congress, who resolved that they should "be published in the several gazettes, that the good people of the United States might be informed of what nature were the Commissioners, and what the terms, with the expectation of which, the insidious Court of Britain had sought to amuse and disarm them; and that the few who still remained, suspended by a hope, founded either in the justice or moderation of their late King, might now, at length, be convinced, that

that the valour alone of their country is to save its liberties."

About the same time that these papers were put into circulation, Lord Howe sent, with a flag, a letter addressed to "George Washington, Esq." which the General refused to receive, as "it did not acknowledge the public character with which he was invested by Congress, and in no other character could he have any intercourse with his Lordship." This dignified proceeding was highly approved by Congress, in a particular resolution, which also directed, "that no letter or message be received, on any occasion whatever, from the enemy, by the Commander in Chief, or others the Commanders of the American army, but such as shall be directed to them in the characters they respectively sustain."

As there was some difficulty in recognising either the civil or military character conferred on individuals by the existing powers in America, and yet it was desirable, either for the purpose of effecting a pacification, or of dividing still more the Americans, if a pacification should be impracticable, to open negotiations, and hold out the semblance of restoring peace, the Commissioners cast about for means to evade this preliminary obstacle to any discussion of the terms they were authorized to propose; and, at length, Colonel Pat-

Patterson, Adjutant-General of the British army, was sent on shore by General Howe, with a letter directed to George Washington, &c. &c. &c. He was introduced to the General, whom he addressed by the title of "Excellency;" and, after the usual compliments, entered on business, by saying, that General Howe much regretted the difficulties which had arisen respecting the address of the letters; that the mode adopted was deemed consistent with propriety, and was founded on precedent, in cases of ambassadors and plenipotentiaries, where disputes or difficulties about rank had arisen. That General Washington might recollect he had, last summer, addressed a letter to "The Honourable William Howe." That Lord and General Howe did not mean to derogate from his rank, or the respect due to him, and that they held his person and character in the highest esteem; but that the direction, with the addition of &c. &c. &c. implied every thing which ought to follow. Colonel Patterson then produced a letter, which he said was the same that had been sent, and which he laid on the table.

The General declined receiving it; and said, that a letter, directed to a person in a public character, should have some description or indication of that character, otherwise it would be considered as a mere private letter. It was true the etceteras implied every thing, and they also implied any thing.

thing. That the letter to General Howe, alluded to, was an answer to one received from him under a like address, which, having been taken by the officer on duty, he did not think proper to return, and therefore answered in the same mode of address; and that he should absolutely decline any letter, relating to his public station, directed to him as a private person.

Colonel Patterson then said, that General Howe would not urge his delicacy further, and repeated his assertions, that no failure of respect was intended.

Some conversation then passed, relative to the treatment of prisoners; after which, Colonel Patterson said, that the goodness and benevolence of the King had induced him to appoint Lord Howe and General Howe his Commissioners, to accommodate the unhappy dispute at present subsisting: that they had great powers, and would derive much pleasure from effecting the accommodation; and that he wished this visit to be considered as making the first advance towards so desirable an object.

General Washington replied, that he was not vested with any powers on this subject, by those from whom he derived his authority; but he would observe, that so far as he could judge from what had as yet transpired, Lord Howe and General Howe were only empowered to grant pardons: that those who had committed no fault wanted no pardon; and that the Americans were only defend-

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ing what they deemed their indubitable rights. This, Colonel Patterson said, would open a very wide field for argument; and after expressing his fears that an adherence to forms might obstruct business of the greatest moment and concern, he took his leave.

The substance of this conversation was communicated to Congress, and was ordered by that body to be published.

In the mean time, General Washington was extremely desirous of making some impression on the enemy before their whole force should be collected. He conceived it to be very practicable to cross over in the night, from the mouth of Thompson's Creek, a little below Elizabeth Town, on the Jersey shore, to Staten Island, and cut off some detached posts of the enemy near the Blazing Star, within a peninsula formed by two creeks, which could not easily be reinforced. This plan was to be executed by General Mercer, who commanded the flying camp, and who assisted in forming it; but the weather, on the night fixed on for its execution, was so very tempestuous, as to make it impossible to cross the Sound in such boats as had been provided.

The reinforcements to the British army, about four hundred and fifty of whom had been captured by the American cruizers, were now arriving daily from Europe, and General Howe had also

been joined by the troops from the southward. His strength was not accurately known, but was estimated, in the total, at about twenty-four thousand men.

The last division of the Germans had not yet reached him, but they were not expected soon, and he thought himself strong enough to open the campaign without them.

To this army, alike formidable for its numbers, and the abundant supply of military stores, of every sort, with which it was furnished, aided in its operations by a numerous fleet, General Washington had, from the time it was first expected, incessantly pressed Congress to oppose a force permanent in its own nature; capable, from its structure, of receiving military discipline; and competent, in point of numbers, to the defence of the country. It has been already observed, that these remonstrances had not produced all the effect to which they were entitled.

Without doubt, the difficulties embarrassing Congress were of a nature not to be immediately or entirely removed by human efforts. Hostilities had commenced at a time when neither arms, ammunition, nor military stores of any kind, sufficient to serve a moderate army a single campaign, were in the country. The government was in possession of no revenue; and those resources, from which revenue might be expected to flow, were

dried up by the almost total annihilation of their commerce. They could only rely on paper emissions, unsupported by solid funds, the value of which could only be kept up by heavy taxes, which they had not the power to impose, and the imposition of which, had they possessed the power, might produce very serious effects on the dispositions of the people. It was, therefore, necessary to disburse money with great caution. Yet this saving temper, however necessary to a certain extent, might be carried too far; and it was possible to expose to hazard, by a too rigid economy, the most important objects. But there were certain opinions prevalent in the United States, from which they receded slowly, and from which melancholy experience only could drive them, that were productive of the most fatal consequences. One of these, and the most essential, was, that an army could be created every campaign, for the purposes of that campaign; and that such temporary provisions might be relied on for the defence of the country. It is probable that this system owes its introduction, in some degree, to the state of things when the army was raised, that measure being the act of separate and temporary governments; in some degree, to the nature of the war, the prosecution of which they still hoped would be abandoned by the British nation, when the extent of

the opposition in America should be known; in some degree, to the ancient habits of the eastern colonies; and in some degree to the prejudices against a regular army, and a disinclination to believe in the superiority of a permanent and disciplined force.

It is probable that the hope was cherished, by many, that the Commissioners, who had been long expected, would bring with them propositions which would serve as the basis of an accommodation: and though the majority had taken up opinions in favour of independence, yet the minority was capable of impeding measures which seemed to exclude every idea of terminating the war but by the sword. In a private letter, written by General Washington, while attending Congress, in May, to a confidential friend, he declared the opinion, that nothing was to be expected from the Commissioners, and that the idea had only been suggested, to deceive America, and prevent her taking those measures which her situation rendered necessary. "This," he added, "has been too effectually accomplished, as many members of Congress, in short, the representatives of whole provinces, are still feeding themselves on the dainty food of reconciliation; and though they will not allow that the expectation of it has any influence on their judgments, so far as respects preparations for defence, it is but too obvious that it has an opera-

operation on every part of their conduct, and is a clog to all their proceedings. It is not in the nature of things to be otherwise; for no man, who entertains a hope of seeing this dispute speedily and equitably adjusted by Commissioners, will go to the same expense, and incur the same hazards, to prepare for the worst event, that he will who believes that he must conquer, or submit unconditionally, and take the consequences—such as confiscation and hanging."

Whatever might be the causes, it is certain that the American army was not in a condition to realize the hopes of the country, or the wishes of its Chief. It consisted, when General Howe landed on Staten Island, of not more than ten thousand men. This small force was not yet sufficiently furnished with arms, and the men were very sickly. The diseases which always afflict new troops, were probably, in some degree, increased by their being greatly exposed, in consequence of the want of tents. At the instance of the General, some regiments, stationed in the different states, were ordered to join him; and, in addition to the requisitions of men to serve till December, requisitions not yet complied with, the neighbouring militias were called into service for the present exigency. Yet, on the eighth of August, in a letter to Congress, he stated, that, "for the several ports on New York, Long, and Governor's Island, and Paulus-hook, the army

consisted only of seventeen thousand two hundred and twenty-five men, of whom three thousand six hundred and sixty-eight were sick; and that in case of an immediate attack, he could count certainly on no other addition to his numbers than a battalion from Maryland, under the command of Colonel Smallwood. This force was rendered the more inadequate to its objects, by being necessarily divided for the defence of posts, some of which were fifteen miles distant from others, with navigable waters between them."

"These things," continued the letter, "are melancholy, but they are, nevertheless, true. I hope for better. Under every disadvantage, my utmost exertions shall be employed to bring about the great end we have in view; and so far as I can judge from the professions and apparent dispositions of my troops, I shall have their support. The superiority of the enemy, and the expected attack, do not seem to have depressed their spirits. These considerations lead me to think, that though the appeal may not terminate so happily as I could wish, yet the enemy will not succeed in their views without considerable loss. Any advantage they may gain, I trust, will cost them dear."

Soon after this letter, the army was reinforced by Smallwood's regiment, and by two regiments from Pennsylvania, with a body of New England and New York militia, which increased it to twenty-

twenty-seven thousand men, of whom one-fourth were sick.

A part of this army was stationed on Long Island, where Major-General Green originally commanded; but he being, unfortunately, taken extremely ill, was succeeded by Major-General Sullivan. The residue occupied different stations on York Island, except two small detachments, one on Governor's Island, and the other at Paulus-hook; and except a part of the New York militia, under General Clinton, who were stationed on the Sound towards New Rochelle, East and West Chester, in order to give some opposition to the enemy, in the event of a sudden attempt to land above Kingsbridge, and cut off the communication with the country.

As an attack from the enemy was daily expected, and it was believed that the influence of the first battle would be very considerable, all the vigilance and attention of the General was unremittingly exerted, to prevent, among his raw troops, those unmilitary and dangerous practices into which men, unused to the necessary restraints of a camp, will ever indulge; and to establish, as far as possible, those principles of subordination, and exact observance of orders, so essential to victory. He also used every expedient to rouse the latent sparks of that enthusiastic love of liberty, that indignation against the invaders of their coun-

try, and that native courage, which he believed now animated the bosoms of Americans; and which he greatly relied on as substitutes for discipline and experience. "The time," say his orders issued soon after the arrival of General Howe, "is now near at hand, which must probably determine whether Americans are to be free men or slaves; whether they are to have any property they can call their own; whether their houses and farms are to be pillaged and destroyed, and themselves consigned to a state of wretchedness, from which no human efforts will deliver them. The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on the courage and conduct of this army. Our cruel and unrelenting enemy leaves us only the choice of a brave resistance, or the most abject submission. We have, therefore, to resolve to conquer, or to die. Our own, our country's honour, call upon us for a vigorous and manly exertion; and if we now shamefully fail, we shall become infamous to the whole world. Let us then rely on the goodness of our cause and the aid of the Supreme Being, in whose hands victory is, to animate and encourage us to great and noble actions. The eyes of all our countrymen are now upon us, and we shall have their blessings and praises, if happily we are the instruments of saving them from the tyranny meditated against them. Let us, therefore, animate and encourage each other,

other, and shew the whole world that a free man, contending for liberty on his own ground, is superior to any slavish mercenary on earth."

He recommended to the officers, great coolness in time of action; and to the soldiers, strict attention and obedience, with a becoming firmness and spirit.

He assured them, that any officer, soldier, or corps, which should distinguish him, or themselves, by any acts of extraordinary bravery, should most certainly meet with notice and rewards; while, on the other hand, those who should fail in the performance of their duty, would as certainly be exposed and punished.

Whilst preparing for the expected engagement, intelligence was received of the repulse of the enemy, in their attack on Fort Moultrie; and he availed himself of the occasion of communicating this success to his army, to add the spirit of emulation to the other motives which should impel them to manly exertions. "This glorious example of our troops, under the like circumstances with ourselves, the General hopes will animate every officer and soldier to imitate, and even to out-do them, when the enemy shall make the same attempt on us. With such a bright example before us, of what can be done by brave men, fighting in defence of their country, we shall be loaded with a double share of shame and infamy, if we

do not acquit ourselves with courage, and manifest a determined resolution to conquer or die. With the hope and confidence that this army will have an equal share of honour and success, the General most earnestly exhorts every officer and soldier to pay the utmost attention to his arms and health; to have the former in the best order for action, and by cleanliness and care to preserve the latter; to be exact in their discipline, obedient to their superiors, and vigilant on duty. With such preparations, and a suitable spirit, there can be no doubt but, by the blessing of Heaven, we shall repel our cruel invaders, preserve our country, and gain the greatest honour."

As the crisis approached, his anxiety increased. Endeavouring to breathe into his army his own spirit, and to give them his own feelings, he thus addressed them: "The enemy's whole reinforcement is now arrived, so that an attack must, and will, soon be made. The General, therefore, again repeats his earnest request, that every officer and soldier will have his arms and ammunition in good order; keep within his quarters and encampments as much as possible; be ready for action at a moment's call, and when called to it, remember that liberty, property, life, and honour, are all at stake; that upon their courage and conduct rest the hopes of their bleeding and insulted country; that their wives, children, and parents, expect

safety

safety from them only; and that we have every reason to believe, that Heaven will crown with success so just a cause.

"The enemy will endeavour to intimidate by show and appearance; but remember they have been repulsed on various occasions by a few brave Americans; their cause is bad, their men are conscious of it; and if opposed with firmness and coolness on their first onset, with our advantage of works, and knowledge of the ground, the victory is most assuredly ours. Every good soldier will be silent and attentive, wait for orders, and reserve his fire till he is sure of doing execution; of this, the officers are to be particularly careful."

He then gave the most explicit orders, that any soldier who should attempt to conceal himself, or retreat without orders, should instantly be shot, as an example of the punishment of cowardice, and desired every officer to be particularly attentive to the conduct of his men, and report those who should distinguish themselves by brave and noble actions, whom he solemnly promised to notice and reward.

Thus did he endeavour to compensate for want of arms, discipline, and numbers, by infusing into every bosom those sentiments which would lead to the greatest individual exertion.

As the defence of Long Island was intimately connected with that of New York, a brigade had very

very early been stationed there, and had taken a strong position at Brooklyn, capable of being maintained for a considerable time. This post, communicating immediately with York Island, might either be reinforced or abandoned, as occasion should require; and there an extensive camp had been marked out and fortified. Brooklyn is a village on a small peninsula made by the East river, the bay, and Gowan's Cove, into which a creek empties itself. The encampment fronted the main land of this island, and the works stretched quite across the peninsula, from Wallaback Bay, in the East River, on the left, to a deep marsh on the creek emptying into Gowan's Cove, on the right. The rear was covered and defended from an attack from the ships by strong batteries on Red Hook, and on Governor's Island, which in a great measure commanded that part of the bay, and by other batteries on East River, which kept open the communication with York Island. In front of the camp was a range of hills covered with thick woods, which extended from east to west nearly the length of the island, and across which were three different roads leading to Brooklyn Ferry *. These hills, though steep, are every where passable by infantry.

The movements of the enemy soon indicated an intention to make their first attack on Long Island;

* Ann. Reg.

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in consequence of which, General Sullivan was strongly reinforced. Early in the morning of the twenty-second, the principal part of the British troops, with Colonel Donop's corps of chasseurs and Hessian grenadiers, with forty pieces of cannon, landed without opposition, under cover of the guns of the fleet, near Utrecht and Gravesend, on the south-west point of the island, and not far from the Narrows, where it approaches nearest to Staten Island. This division of the army was commanded by Lieutenant General Clinton. A regiment of Pennsylvanians, under Colonel Hand, who guarded the coast, retired before them to the woody heights commanding a pass leading directly through Flat Bush to the works at Brooklyn. Lord Cornwallis was immediately detached to Flat Bush, with orders to seize the pass, if it should be unoccupied, but not to risk an attack, if he found it in the possession of the Americans. The pass being guarded, his Lordship took post in the village, and the army extended from the ferry at the Narrows, through Utrecht and Gravesend, to the village of Flat Land *.

There being now a certainty that an engagement would soon take place, General Washington made still another effort to inspire his troops with the most determined courage. "The enemy,"

* General Howe's letter.

said

said he, in addressing them, "have now landed on Long Island, and the hour is fast approaching, on which the honour and success of this army, and the safety of our bleeding country, depends. Remember, officers and soldiers, that you are freemen fighting for the blessings of liberty; that slavery will be your portion and that of your posterity, if you do not acquit yourselves like men. Remember how your courage has been despised and traduced by your cruel invaders; though they have found, by dear experience, at Boston, Charlestown, and other places, what a few brave men, contending in their own land, and in the best of causes, can do against hirelings and mercenaries. Be cool, but determined. Do not fire at a distance, but wait for orders from your officers." He repeated his injunctions to shoot any person who should misbehave in action, and his hope "that none so infamous would be found; but that, on the contrary, each for himself resolving to conquer or die, and trusting to the smiles of Heaven on so just a cause, would behave with bravery and resolution." His assurance of rewards to those who should distinguish themselves, were repeated; and he declared "his confidence, that, if the army would but emulate and imitate their brave countrymen in other parts of America, they would, by a glorious victory, save their country, and acquire to themselves immortal honour."

Major-General Putnam was now directed to take command at Brooklyn, the camp at which was reinforced with six regiments; and he was charged most earnestly by the Commander in Chief to be in constant readiness for an attack, and to guard the woods between the two camps with his best troops. On the same day Lieutenant General de Heister landed with two brigades of Hessians. The next day he took post at Flat Bush, and in the evening, Lord Cornwallis, with the British, drew off to Flat Land *.

General Washington had passed the day at Brooklyn, making the best arrangements for the approaching action, and at night returned to New York.

The Hessians, under General de Heister, composed the centre of the British army at Flat Bush; Major-General Grant commanded the left wing, which extended to the coast; and the greater part of the British forces, under General Clinton, Earl Percy, and Lord Cornwallis, turned short to the right, and approached the opposite coast of Flat Land.

The two armies were now separated from each other by the range of hills already mentioned. The centre of the enemy, at Flat Bush, was scarcely four miles distant from the lines at Brooklyn, and a direct road led across the heights from

* General Howe's letter.

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the one to the other. There was also another road, rather more circuitous than the first, leading from Flat Bush by the way of Bedford, a small village on the Brooklyn side of the hills. The right and left wings of the British army were nearly equidistant from the American works, and about five or six miles from them. The road leading from the Narrows along the coast, and by the way of Gowan's Cove, afforded the most direct route to their left; and their right might either return by the way of Flat Bush, and unite with the centre, or take a more circuitous course, and enter a road leading from Jamaica to Bedford. These several roads unite between Bedford and Brooklyn, a small distance in front of the American lines.

On the direct road from Flat Bush to Brooklyn, and very near the former place, the Americans had constructed, in the hills, a strong redoubt, in which were mounted some few pieces of artillery, and it was defended by a body of troops deemed sufficient for the purpose. The coast and Bedford Roads were guarded by detachments posted on the hills, within view of the British camp, which were relieved daily; and directions had been given to throw obstructions in the way, which might embarrass the enemy when advancing. The Convention at New York had ordered General Woodhull, with the militia of Long Island, to take post on the high grounds, as near the enemy

as possible; but he was yet at Jamaica, and seemed scarcely to suppose himself under the control of the regular officer commanding on the island. Light parties of volunteers were directed to patrol on the road from Jamaica to Bedford. About two miles from which, and near Flat Bush, Colonel Miles, of Pennsylvania, was stationed with a regiment of riflemen.

On the 26th, Colonel Lutz, of the Pennsylvania militia, commanded on the coast road; and Colonel Williams, from New England, on the road from Flat Bush to Bedford. Colonel Miles, with his regiment of riflemen, still remained on the ground where he had originally been placed.

About nine o'clock at night, General Clinton silently drew off the van of the army, consisting of the light infantry, grenadiers, light horse, reserve under Lord Cornwallis, and some other corps, with fourteen field-pieces, from Flat Land, across the country, through that part which is called the New Lotts, in order to seize a pass on the heights, about three miles east of Bedford, on the Jamaica road. Arriving entirely undiscovered, about two hours before day-break, within half a mile of the pass, he halted, in order to make his dispositions for taking possession of it. Here his patrols fell in with and captured, without giving any alarm, one of the American parties, which had been stationed on this road for the purpose of giving

giving notice of the first approach of the enemy in that quarter. Learning from his prisoners that the pass was unoccupied, General Clinton immediately seized it; and, on the appearance of day, the whole column passed the heights, and advanced into the level country between them and Brooklyn. They were immediately followed by another column under Lord Percy*. General Grant advanced along the coast, at the head of the left wing of the British, with ten pieces of cannon. As his first object was to draw the attention of the Americans from their left, he moved slowly, skirmishing, as he advanced, with the light parties stationed on that road †.

The suspicions of General Putnam having been very much directed towards the route along the coast, this movement of General Grant was soon discovered and communicated to him. It having been determined that the passes through the hills were to be very seriously contested, reinforcements were immediately ordered out to the assistance of the parties which had been advanced in front; and, as the enemy continued to gain ground, still stronger detachments were employed in this service. About three o'clock in the morning, Brigadier-General Lord Sterling was directed, with the two nearest regiments, to meet the enemy on

* General Howe's letter. † Ibid.

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the road leading from the Narrows. Major-General Sullivan, who commanded all the troops without the lines, proceeded with a very considerable body of New Englanders on the road leading directly to Flat Bush, and another detachment occupied the heights between that place and Bedford.

About break of day, Lord Sterling reached the summit of the hills, where he was joined by the troops which had been already engaged, and were retiring slowly before the enemy, who, almost immediately, appeared in sight. Having posted his men advantageously, a warm cannonade was commenced on both sides, which continued for several hours; and some sharp, but not very close skirmishing, took place between the infantry. Lord Sterling, being only anxious to defend the pass he guarded, could not descend in force from the heights; and General Grant did not wish to drive him from them, till that part of the plan which had been entrusted to Sir Henry Clinton should be executed.

In the centre, General de Heister, soon after day-light, began to cannonade the troops under General Sullivan; but did not move from his ground, at Flat Bush, until the British right had approached the left and rear of the American line. In the mean time, in order the more effectually to draw their attention from the point where the

grand attack was intended, the fleet was put in motion, and a very heavy cannonade commenced, and kept up on the battery at Red-Hook.

About half-past eight o'clock, the British right having then reached Bedford, in the rear of Sullivan's left, General de Heister ordered Colonel Donop's corps to advance to the attack of the hill, following himself with the centre of the army. The approach of Clinton was now discovered by the American left, which immediately endeavoured to regain the camp at Brooklyn. They were retiring from the woods by regiments, with their cannon, when they encountered the front of the British, consisting of the light infantry and light dragoons, who were soon supported by the guards. About the same time the Hessians advanced from Flat Bush against that part of the detachment which occupied the direct road to Brooklyn *. Here General Sullivan commanded in person; but he found it extremely difficult to keep his troops together, even long enough to sustain the first attack. The firing heard towards Bedford had disclosed to them the alarming fact, that the British had turned their left flank, and were getting completely into their rear. Perceiving at once the full danger of their situation, they sought to escape it by regaining the camp with the

* General Howe's letter.

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utmost possible celerity. The sudden route of this party enabled de Heister to detach a part of his force against those who were engaged near Bedford. In that quarter, too, the Americans were broken, and driven back into the woods; and the front of the column, led by General Clinton, continuing to move forward, intercepted and engaged those who were retreating along the direct road from Flat Bush. Thus attacked both in front and rear, and alternately driven by the British on the Hessians, and by the Hessians back again on the British, a succession of skirmishes took place in the woods; in the course of which, some parts of the corps forced their way through the enemy, and regained the lines of Brooklyn, and several individuals saved themselves under cover of the woods; but a great proportion of the detachment was killed or taken. The fugitives were pursued up to the American works; and such is represented to have been the ardour of the British soldiery, that it required the authority of their cautious Commander to prevent an immediate attempt to carry them by storm.

The fire towards Brooklyn gave the first intimation to the American right, that the enemy had gained their rear. Lord Sterling perceived the danger with which he was threatened, and that he could only escape it by instantly retreating across the creek in his rear, near the Yellow Mills,

not far from the cove. Orders to this effect were immediately given; and, the more effectually to secure the retreat of the main body of the detachment, he determined to attack, in person, a corps of the British under Lord Cornwallis, stationed at a house somewhat above the place at which he proposed crossing the creek. About four hundred men, of Smallwood's regiment, were drawn out for this purpose, and the attack was made with great spirit. This small corps was brought up several times to the charge, and Lord Sterling stated that he was on the point of dislodging Lord Cornwallis from his post, but the force in his front increasing, and General Grant also advancing on his rear, the brave men he commanded were no longer able to oppose the superior numbers which assailed them on every quarter, and those who survived, were, with their General, made prisoners of war. This bold and well-judged attempt, however, was not without its advantages. It gave an opportunity to a large part of the detachment to save themselves by crossing the creek.

The loss sustained by the American army, on this occasion, was very considerable, but could not be accurately ascertained by either party. Numbers were supposed to have been drowned in the creek, or suffocated in the marsh, whose bodies were never found; and exact accounts

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from the militia are seldom to be expected, as the list of the missing is always swelled by those who return to their homes. General Washington did not admit it to exceed a thousand men; but, in this estimate, he could only have included the regular troops. In the letter written by General Howe, he states the prisoners to have amounted to one thousand and ninety-seven, among whom were Major-General Sullivan, and Brigadiers Lord Sterling and Woodhull, by him named Udell. He computes the loss of the Americans at three thousand three hundred men; but this computation is, probably, excessive. He supposes, too, that the troops engaged on the heights amounted to one thousand; but it is impossible they could have much exceeded half that number. The loss of the enemy is stated, by General Howe, at twenty-one officers and three hundred and forty-six privates, killed, wounded, and taken.

As the action became warm, General Washington passed over to the camp at Brooklyn, where he saw, with inexpressible anguish, the destruction in which his best troops were involved, and from which it was impossible to extricate them. Should he attempt any thing in their favour, with the men remaining within the lines of Brooklyn, it was probable, from the superiority of the enemy, that the camp itself would be lost, and that whole division of his army destroyed. Should he bring

over the remaining battalions from New York, he would still have been unequal to the enemy; and his whole army, with, perhaps, the fate of his country, might be staked on the issue of a single battle, so inauspiciously commenced. He was, therefore, compelled to behold the carnage of his troops, without being able to assist them, and to direct all his efforts to the preservation of those which remained.

The enemy, believing the Americans to be much stronger than they were in reality, and seeming unwilling to commit any thing to hazard, fortunately made no immediate attempt to force the lines. They encamped in front of them, and on the twenty-eighth, at night, broke ground in form, within six hundred yards of a redoubt on the left.

The situation of the army, on Long Island, had now become extremely critical. In front was a victorious enemy, from whom much was to be apprehended, in case of assault, but whose numbers, and formidable train of artillery, rendered the destruction of their works, by regular approaches, inevitable. The movements of the fleet, too, indicated an intention to make some attempt on New York, and, so soon as the wind should be favourable, to force a passage into the East River: should they succeed in this attempt, and attack him by water, while the army might assault him by

by land, they would render his retreat extremely difficult, if not absolutely impracticable. The troops, too, being obliged to lie in the lines, without shelter from the heavy rains which fell, were excessively fatigued and dispirited. Under these circumstances, it was determined to withdraw from Long Island; and this difficult movement was effected, on the night of the 28th, with such silence and dispatch, that all the troops and military stores, with the greater part of the provisions, and all the artillery, except such heavy pieces as, in the deep roads made by the excessive heavy rains which had fallen, could not possibly be drawn, were carried over in safety. Early the next morning, the enemy perceived the rear-guard crossing the East River, out of reach of their fire. From the commencement of the action, on the morning of the twenty-seventh, till the troops had crossed the East River on the morning of the twenty-ninth, and were freed from the immediate perils to which their situation had exposed them, the exertions and fatigues of the Commander in Chief, who personally inspected almost every thing, were incessant. Throughout that time he never closed his eyes, and was almost constantly on horseback.

The attempt to defend Long Island was so disastrous in its issue, and believed to have been so perilous in itself, that persons were not wanting

who condemned it; and it is yet represented as a great error in the Commander in Chief. But, in deciding on the wisdom of measures, the event will not always lead to a correct judgment. Before a just opinion can be formed, it is necessary to consider the previous state of things; to weigh the motives which led to the decision; and to compare the value of the object, and the probability of securing it, with the hazards attending the attempt.

The importance of the town of New York, and of Long Island, to either party, has been already stated, and was, throughout the war, very clearly demonstrated. It was extremely desirable to maintain the possession of them, if practicable; or, if that could not be done, to consume the campaign in the struggle for them. The abandonment of Long Island, besides giving the enemy secure and immediate possession of an extensive and fertile country, would certainly very much facilitate the success of their attempt upon New York. It was, therefore, to be avoided, if possible.

The impossibility of avoiding it was not evident, till the battle had been fought. It was true that the American force on the island could not be rendered equal, even in point of numbers, to the enemy; but, with the advantage of the defensible country through which it was necessary to pass, and

and of a fortified camp which could only be attacked on one side, considerable hopes might be entertained, without being over sanguine, of at least maintaining the position for a considerable time; and of selling it, ultimately, at a high price. That such an opinion was not ill founded, seems to be evidenced by the cautious movement of General Howe, who, even after the victory of the twenty-seventh, was not disposed to attack it without the co-operation of the fleet, but chose rather to carry it by regular approaches. Nor would the situation of the troops on Long Island have been desperate, even in the event of a conjoint attack both by sea and land, before their strength and spirits were broken by the action of the twenty-seventh. The East River was guarded by very strong batteries on both sides; and the entrance into it, from the bay, was defended by Governor's Island, which was fortified, and in which two regiments were placed. The ships could not lie in that river without first silencing those batteries, which would have been found extremely difficult; and therefore their aid could only be given when a storm of the works should be intended; and when that should appear practicable, the troops might be withdrawn from the island.

There was then, certainly, in the plan of maintaining Long Island, considerable hazard; but not

so much as to demonstrate the propriety of relinquishing a post of so much importance, without a struggle to preserve it.

With much more appearance of reason, the General has been condemned for not having guarded the road which leads over the hills from Jamaica to Bedford. An attention to this object was more particularly the duty of the officer commanding at the post, whose general written instructions, given two days previously to the action, had directed that the woods should be well guarded, and the approach of the enemy through them rendered as difficult as possible. But his numbers were not sufficient to maintain, in full force, detachments which should guard all the defiles through the mountains; and if a strong corps, capable of, and intended for, serious resistance, had been posted on this road, and a feint had been made on them, while a serious and successful effort had been made to pass the hills, by the direct road from Flat Bush, or by that along the coast, the defence of which must have been proportionably weakened, the columns, marching directly from Flat Bush, must, on every reasonable calculation, have been in possession of the plain in the rear of the detachment posted on the road from Jamaica, so as to have intercepted their retreat to the camp, before they could have made it good. So great is the advantage in those who attack, in being able to choose the

the point against which to direct their main efforts; while those who are to defend, if not sufficiently strong to guard all posts alike, must leave some not completely secured, that the best skilled in the art of war find much difficulty in maintaining an extensive line, accessible in many points.

The most advisable plan then appears to have been, so to watch the motions of the enemy, as, if possible, to be master of his designs, to oppose with a competent force every attempt to seize the heights, and to guard all the passes in such a manner as to receive notice of the approach, through any one of them, in sufficient time to recall the troops maintaining the others.

This plan was adopted; and the heavy disasters of the day are, principally, attributable to the failure of those charged with the execution of that very important part of it, respecting the intelligence from the Jamaica road. The letter of General Howe states that an American patroling party was taken on this road; and General Washington, in a private and confidential communication to a friend, says, "This misfortune happened, in a great measure, by two detachments of our people, who were posted in two roads leading through a wood, to intercept the enemy in their march, suffering a surprize, and making a precipitate retreat."

The events of this day, too, exhibited a practical demonstration of a radical defect in the construction

struction of the army. There was not in it a single corps of cavalry. That false economy which miscalculates so much as to deny the means essential to the end, had not yet sufficiently relaxed, to admit of so expensive an establishment. Had the General been furnished with a few troops of light horse, to serve merely as videts, to watch the motions of the enemy, and bring intelligence expeditiously, it is probable that the movement, so decisive of the fate of the day, could not have been made unnoticed. The troops on the lines do not appear to have observed the column which was withdrawn, on the evening of the twenty-sixth, from Flat Bush to Flat Land. Had this important manœuvre been communicated, it would most probably have turned the attention of General Putnam more particularly to the Jamaica Road. It is to the want of videts, that a failure to obtain this important intelligence is to be ascribed. The necessity, too, of changing the officer originally entrusted with the command, was an unfortunate circumstance, which very probably contributed to the event which happened.

Whatever causes might have led to this defeat, it gave a very gloomy aspect to the affairs of America. Heretofore, their arms had been frequently successful, and their soldiers had always manifested a great degree of intrepidity. A confidence in themselves, a persuasion of their superi-

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ority over the enemy, arising from the goodness of their cause, and their early and habitual use of fire-arms, had been carefully inculcated, and had been nourished by all their experience preceding this event. When they found themselves, by a course of evolutions in which they imagined they perceived a great superiority of military skill, encircled with unexpected dangers, from which no exertions could extricate them, their confidence in themselves, and in their leaders, was greatly diminished; and the approach of the enemy inspired the apprehension, that some stratagem was concealed, from which immediate flight could alone preserve them.

To this course of thought, which raw troops, when defeated, so readily take up, the American army was, from the materials which composed it, particularly exposed. The regulars themselves, if they might be so termed, were enlisted, many of them, but for one year; and a very considerable part of the existing force had been called into service but for a few weeks. They knew that, by parrying the danger of the moment, they would return in safety to their families, and throw, at least for a time, the hazards of war on others. Only a degree of personal courage, superior to what is possessed by the great mass of mankind, or a degree of enthusiasm seldom of long and universal duration, will induce troops, under such circumstances,

stances, to support, with such patient suffering, the hardships of an active campaign; and to exhibit such uniform, steady, and persevering fortitude, in posts of danger, that the confidence of their General and their country may be safely reposed in them.

The state of the army, after this event, was, in a letter from General Washington to Congress, thus feelingly described: "Our situation is truly distressing. The check our detachment sustained, on the 27th ultimo, has dispirited too great a proportion of our troops, and filled their minds with apprehension and despair. The militia, instead of calling forth their utmost efforts to a brave and manly opposition, in order to repair our losses, are dismayed, intractable, and impatient to return. Great numbers of them have gone off; in some instances, almost by whole regiments; in many, by half ones, and by companies, at a time. This circumstance, of itself, independent of others, when fronted by a well-appointed enemy, superior in number to our whole collected force, would be sufficiently disagreeable; but, when it is added, that their example has infected another part of the army, that their want of discipline, and refusal of almost every kind of restraint and government, have rendered a like conduct but too common in the whole, and have produced an entire disregard of that order and subordination necessary for the well-

well-doing of an army, and which had been before inculcated as well as the nature of our military establishment would admit, our condition is still more alarming, and, with the deepest concern, I am obliged to confess my want of confidence in the generality of the troops.

"All these circumstances fully confirm the opinion I ever entertained, and which I, more than once, in my letters, took the liberty of mentioning to Congress, that no dependence could be put in a militia, or other troops, than those enlisted and embodied for a longer period than our regulations have hitherto prescribed. I am persuaded, and am as fully convinced as of any one fact that has happened, that our liberties must, of necessity, be greatly hazarded, if not entirely lost, if their defence be left to any but a permanent army.

"Nor would the expense incident to the support of such a body of troops as would be competent to every exigency, far exceed that which is incurred by calling in daily succours, and new enlistments, which, when effected, are not attended with any good consequences. Men, who have been free, and subject to no control, cannot be reduced to order in an instant; and the privileges and exemptions they claim, and will have, influence the conduct of others in such a manner, that the aid derived from them is nearly counterbalanced by the disorder, irregularity, and confusion, they occasion."

The

The frequent remonstrances of the Commander in Chief, the opinions of all military men, the severe correcting hand of experience, had, at length, produced their effect on Congress; and, soon after the defeat on Long Island, it had been referred to the committee, composing the Board of War, to prepare a plan of operations for the next succeeding campaign. Their report, which was adopted by Congress, proposed a permanent army, to be enlisted for the war, and to be composed of eighty-eight battalions, to be raised by the several states in proportion to their ability *. As an inducement to enlist, a bounty of twenty dollars was allowed, and small portions of vacant lands promised to every officer and soldier †.

Had

* New Hampshire 3
Massachussetts 15
Rhode Island 2
Connecticut 8
New York 4
New Jersey 4
Pennsylvania 12
Delaware 1
Maryland 8
Virginia 15
North Carolina 9
South Carolina 6
Georgia 1
88

† To a Colonel ..... 500 acres
Lieutenant-Colonel .. 450
Major

Had this system been adopted in 1775, the war would probably have been of much shorter duration; but much is to be allowed for the want of military experience in Congress; for prejudices which prevailed throughout America; and very much for the organization of the government, which, while the essentials of power were parcelled out among the several local legislatures, placed, in that of the union, little more than the right to recommend, a right to be exercised with great caution—because measures, manifesting an expectation that the war might be of long continuance, or which might excite a suspicion of aiming at independence, or of an indisposition to a re-establishment of the antient connexion between Great Britain and America might, in the early stage of the contest, have produced very serious consequences in some parts of the union.

The first use made by Lord Howe of the victory of the 27th of August, was to avail himself of the impression it had probably made on Congress, by

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Major.....400
Captain.....300
Lieutenant.....200
Ensign 150
And an officer or private 100

The resolution was afterwards changed, so as to give the option to enlist for three years, or during the war. Those enlisting for three years not to be entitled to land.

opening a negotiation, in conformity with his powers as a Commissioner. For this purpose, General Sullivan was sent on parole to Philadelphia, with a verbal message, the import of which, when reduced to writing, was, that though he could not, at present, treat with Congress as a political body, yet he was very desirous of having a conference with some of their members, whom he would consider, for the present, only as private gentlemen, and meet them as such at any place they would appoint.

That he, in conjunction with General Howe, had full powers to compromise the dispute between Great Britain and America, on terms advantageous to both; the obtaining of which delayed him near two months in England, and prevented his arrival at New York before the declaration of independence took place.

That he wished a compact might be settled at this time, when no decisive blow was struck, and neither party could allege being compelled to enter into such agreement.

That in case Congress were disposed to treat, many things, which they had not as yet asked, might and ought to be granted them; and that, if, upon the conference, they found any probable ground of an accommodation, the authority of Congress must be afterwards acknowledged, otherwise the compact would not be complete.

This proposition of Lord Howe was not without its embarrassments. To reject it altogether would

be

be to give some countenance to the opinion that, if independence were waved, a restoration of the antient connexion between the two countries, on principles formerly deemed constitutional, was still practicable; an opinion believed by Congress not to be well-founded, but which would have an unfavourable effect on the public sentiment, and which, therefore, it was useful to explode. On the other hand, to enter into a negotiation, under such circumstances, might excite a suspicion that their determination to maintain the independence they had declared was not immoveable, and that things were in such a situation, as to admit of some relaxation in the measures necessary for the defence of the country.

The answer given to Lord Howe, through General Sullivan, was, "That Congress, being the representatives of the free and independent states of America, cannot with propriety send any of its members to confer with his lordship in their private characters; but that, ever desirous of establishing peace on reasonable terms, they will send a committee of their body, to know whether he has any authority to treat with persons authorised by Congress for that purpose, on behalf of America; and what that authority is, and to hear such propositions as he shall think proper to make respecting the same."

The President was at the same time directed to

give to General Washington the opinion of Congress, that no propositions for making peace "ought to be received or attended to, unless the same be made in writing, and addressed to the representatives of the United States in Congress, or persons authorized by them. And if application be made to him by any of the Commanders of the British forces on that subject, that he inform them, that the United States, who entered into the war only for the defence of their lives and liberties, will cheerfully agree to peace, on reasonable terms, whenever such shall be proposed to them in manner aforesaid."

It is worthy of remark, that, in these resolutions, Congress preserve the appearance of insisting on the independence of the United States, without declaring it to be the indispensable condition of peace.

Mr. Franklin, Mr. John Adams, and Mr. Edward Rutlege, all zealous advocates for independence, were appointed, in conformity with the first resolution, to receive the communications of Lord Howe.

They waited on his lordship, and, on their return, reported, that "he had received them, on the 11th of September, on Staten Island, opposite to Amboy, with great politeness."

He opened the conversation by acquainting them, that though he could not treat with them as a committee

mittee of Congress, yet, as his powers enabled him to confer and consult with any private gentlemen of influence in the colonies, on the means of restoring peace between the two countries, he was glad of this opportunity of conferring with them on that subject, if they thought themselves at liberty to enter into a conference with him in that character. The committee observed to his lordship, that, as their business was to hear, he might consider them in what light he pleased, and communicate to them any propositions he might be authorized to make, for the purpose mentioned; but that they could consider themselves in no other character than that in which they were placed by order of Congress. His lordship then entered into a discourse of considerable length, which contained no explicit proposition of peace, except one, namely, "That the colonies should return to their allegiance and obedience to the government of Great Britain. The rest consisted principally of assurances, that there was an exceeding good disposition in the King and his ministers to make that government easy to them; with intimations, that, in case of submission, they would cause the offensive acts of parliament to be revised, and the instructions to governors to be reconsidered; that so, if any just causes of complaint were found in the acts, or any errors in government were perceived to have crept into the instructions, they might be amended or withdrawn."

The committee gave it as their opinion to his lordship, that a return to the domination of Great Britain was not now to be expected. They mentioned the repeated humble petitions of the colonies to the King and Parliament, which had been treated with contempt, and answered only by additional injuries; the unexampled patience which had been shewn under their tyrannical government; and that it was not till the late act of parliament, which denounced war against them, and put them out of the King's protection, that they declared their independence; that this declaration had been called for by the people of the colonies in general; and that every colony had approved of it, when made; and all now considered themselves as independent states, and were settling, or had settled, their governments accordingly: so that it was not in the power of Congress to agree for them, that they should return to their former dependent state: that there were no doubt of their inclination to peace, and their willingness to enter into a treaty with Britain, that might be advantageous to both countries; that though his lordship had, at present, no power to treat with them as independent states, he might, if there were the same good disposition in Britain, much sooner obtain fresh powers from thence for that purpose, than powers could be obtained by Congress, from the several colonies, to consent to a submission.

His lordship then saying, that he was sorry to find

find that no accommodation was likely to take place, put an end to the conference.

These fruitless negotiations produced no suspension of hostilities.

The day after the troops had been withdrawn from Long Island, Governor's Island was also evacuated. This place derived its principal importance from being auxiliary to the defence of the position at Brooklyn, and to the communication between that camp and New York. It was also of very considerable consequence, in the event of a direct attack on the town, as it in a great measure commands the harbour. But the position was too hazardous to attempt its preservation, after the evacuation of Long Island; and it was the less to be desired, as the General began to entertain very serious fears of being unable longer to defend New York itself. His whole force, consisting chiefly of militia, did not exceed twenty-five thousand men, one-fourth of whom were sick and unfit for duty. This army, which was, on ordinary calculations, unequal to the defence of a single point, if attacked by the disciplined columns which followed the British standard, was rendered still less capable of maintaining the place, from the great extent of ground it was necessary to guard, and the numerous posts into which it was unavoidably distributed. With infinite chagrin, the General communicated his fears on this subject to Congress, fears

founded on a belief that the troops would not do their duty; and requested their instructions relative to the fate of the city, in the event of his being compelled to evacuate it. In their resolution on this subject, they very wisely determined that no mischief should be done to the town, as they had no doubt of recovering it, though they might for a time lose the possession of it.

The British army, now in perfect possession of Long Island, was posted at Bedford, Bushwic, New Town, Flushing, and Hellgate; and thus fronted and threatened York Island, from its extreme southern point to the part opposite the northern boundary of Long Island, a small distance below the Heights of Haerlem, comprehending a space of about nine miles.

The two armies were divided only by the East River, which is about thirteen hundred yards across, and on both sides of which batteries were erected, which kept up an incessant cannonade on each other.

Immediately after the victory at Brooklyn, dispositions were made to attack New York. A part of the fleet sailed round Long Island, and appeared in the Sound, a large bay which separates that island from Connecticut, and which is connected with the East River by a narrow channel called Hellgate. Two frigates passed between Governor's Island and Red-hook, up the East River, without receiving any injury from the batteries, and were sheltered,

tered, behind a small island, from the American artillery; while the Admiral, with the main body of the fleet, lay at anchor close in with Governor's Island, ready to pass up either the North or East River, or both, and act against any part of York Island.

These movements, especially the appearance of part of the fleet, with some transports, in the Sound, and the encampment towards the north of Long Island, indicated a disposition not to make an attack directly on New York, as had been expected, but to land somewhere about Kingsbridge, take a position which cut off the communication of the American army with the country, and thereby force them to a battle, which, if unfortunate in its issue, as there was much reason to believe it must be, would infallibly destroy them.

Aware of this danger, General Washington set about removing above Kingsbridge, such stores as were not immediately necessary, and determined to call a council of general officers, for the purpose of deciding whether the place should be evacuated without delay, or longer defended.

In his letter, communicating to Congress the result of this council, which was against an immediate evacuation, he appears strongly convinced of the necessity of abandoning the city, though he yields to that necessity with infinite reluctance. Speaking of the enemy, he observed, "it is now extremely

extremely obvious, from their movements, from our intelligence, and from every other circumstance, that, having their whole army upon Long Island, except about four thousand men, who remain on Staten Island, they mean to enclose us in this island, by taking post in our rear, while their ships effectually secure the front; and thus, by cutting off our communication with the country, oblige us to fight them on their own terms, or surrender at discretion; or, if that shall be deemed more advisable, by a brilliant stroke endeavour to cut this army to pieces, and secure the possession of arms and stores which they well know our inability to replace.

"Having their system unfolded to us, it becomes an important consideration, how it could be most successfully opposed. On every side there is a choice of difficulties; and experience teaches us, that every measure on our part, however painful the reflexion, must be taken with some apprehension that all the troops will not do their duty.

"In deliberating upon this great question," he added, "it was impossible to forget that history, our own experience, the advice of our ablest friends in Europe, the fears of the enemy, and even the declarations of Congress, demonstrate, that on our side the war should be defensive—it has ever been called a war of posts; that we should on all occasions avoid a general action, nor put any thing to

the risk, unless compelled by necessity, into which we ought never to be drawn."

After communicating the decision which had been made by the council of officers, the General states, with such force, the opinion of those who were in favour of immediately evacuating the town. as to confirm the belief that it remained his own. "There were some Generals," he observed, "in whose judgment great confidence is to be reposed, that were for an immediate removal from the city. They urged the great danger, that one part of the army may be cut off before it can be supported by the other, the extremities being sixteen miles apart; that we are, when collected, inferior to the enemy; that they can move with their whole force to any point of attack, and, consequently, if opposed by only a part of ours, must succeed by weight of numbers; that by moving from hence, we deprive the enemy of the advantage of their ships, which would constitute one-half their force in an attack on the town; that we may keep them at bay, put nothing to the hazard, and, in any event, keep an army together which may be recruited for another year; that the unspent stores will also be preserved, and the heavy artillery secured."

The majority who over-ruled this opinion, did not expec to be able to defend the city entirely; but to protract the time of losing it, and thereby waste so much of the campaign, before the enemy should

should obtain possession of it, as would prevent their undertaking any thing further this year. They therefore advised a middle course, between abandoning the town absolutely, and concentrating their whole strength for its defence. By the plan recommended, the army was to be arranged in three divisions, one of which, consisting of five thousand men, was to remain in New York. The second, amounting to nine thousand, was to be stationed at Kingsbridge, for the purpose of securing that post and its dependencies. The residue of the army was to occupy the intermediate space, so as to support either extreme; and the sick were to be immediately removed to Orange Town. A belief that Congress was unwilling to give up New York, and rather inclined to maintain it at every hazard; as well as a dread of the unfavourable impression which retreating before the enemy, and thus confessing their superiority, might make on the people at large; seem to have had great influence in producing the determination to defend the place a short time longer.

This opinion, however, was soon changed. The officers became more and more alarmed at the danger resulting from the division of the troops; in addition to which, the movements of the enemy seemed clearly to indicate an intention, either to break their line of communication, or to enclose the whole army in York Island. Their disposi-

tions

tions were alike calculated to favour the one or the other of these objects. They threw considerable detachments into Montresor's and Buchanan's Islands, which lie in the mouth of Haerlem River; from whence it was easy either to pass over to the low grounds of Morrisania on the continent, and seize the passes above Kingsbridge, or cross the East River to the Plains of Haerlem, and cut off, or render extremely hazardous, the communication between the different posts of the American army. Confident that the evacuation must take place, the General continued to employ himself assiduously in the removal of the military stores to a place of safety *.

Several of the officers having avowed a change in their opinions respecting any further attempt to maintain the town, another council was called, in which it was determined, by a large majority, that it had become not only prudent, but absolutely necessary, to withdraw the army from New York.

Brigadier General Mercer, who commanded the flying camp on the Jersey shore, was, in consequence of this determination, directed to move up the North River, to the post opposite Fort Washington, and every effort was used to expedite the removal of the stores; a work which, it was feared,

* He had, on the first appearance of the enemy in force before New York, strongly urged the removal of the women and children, with their most valuable effects, to a place of safety.

would

would soon be interrupted, as an attack was daily apprehended, which, if not repelled, would certainly be attended with the loss of those remaining at the time in the town.

Several other ships of war passed up the East River, and took different stations above the city, so as to create a doubt whether their object was to assist in silencing a battery at Horen's Hook, which very much interrupted the navigation of the Sound, or to favour a landing on York Island. Soon afterwards, several movements were made, with large bodies of troops, towards the Sound and East River, who began to embark, as if either for Montresor's Island, or Morrisania. On receiving intelligence of these operations, General Washington immediately proceeded to the camp at Haerlem, on which place, or on the troops at Morrisania, it was conjectured the attack would be made.

The next morning three ships of war proceeded up the North River as high as Blooming Dale, a movement which entirely stopped the further removal of stores by water; and about eleven o'clock, Sir Henry Clinton, at the head of a division of four thousand men, who had embarked at the head of New Town Bay, which, making deep into Long Island, was out of the view of the American troops, proceeded through that bay into the East River, which he crossed, and landed, under cover of the fire of five ships of war, at a place called

called Kipp's Bay, about three miles above New York.

The works thrown up to oppose the landing of the enemy at this place were of considerable strength, and capable of being defended for some time; but the troops stationed in them, terrified at the fire of the ships, abandoned them, without waiting for the approach of the enemy, and fled with precipitation towards their main body. So soon as the cannonade had commenced, the brigades, commanded by Generals Parsons and Fellows, were put in motion, and marched to the support of those posted in the lines; and General Washington himself rode towards the scene of action. The panic of those who had fled from the works was communicated to the troops ordered to sustain them, and the Commander in Chief had the extreme mortification to meet the whole party retreating in the utmost disorder, totally regardless of the great efforts made by their Generals to stop their disgraceful flight. Whilst General Washington was exerting himself to rally them, a small corps of the enemy appeared, and they again broke and fled in the utmost confusion. It now only remained immediately to withdraw the few remaining troops from New York, and to secure the posts on the heights. For this latter purpose, the lines were all manned, but no attempt was made on them. The retreat from New York was effected

effected with a very inconsiderable loss of men, sustained in a skirmish at Blooming Dale; but all the heavy artillery, and a large portion of the baggage, provisions, and military stores, much of which might have been saved, had the post at Kipp's Bay been properly defended, were unavoidably abandoned. No part of the loss was more severely felt than that of tents. The supply of this important article had before been very inadequate to the demands of the army, and the want of covering began to be now very severely felt. In this shameful day, one Colonel, one Captain, three subalterns, and ten privates, were certainly killed; one Lieutenant-Colonel, one Captain, and one hundred and fifty-seven privates were missing; many of whom were made prisoners, and some of them, perhaps, killed.

The unsoldierly conduct displayed on this occasion, was not attributable to a want of personal courage, but to other causes. The apprehensions excited by the defeat on Long Island had not yet subsided, nor had the American troops recovered their confidence either in themselves or their Commanders. Their situation appeared to themselves to be perilous, and they had not yet acquired that temper which teaches the veteran to do his duty wherever he may be placed; to assure himself that others will do their duty likewise; and to rely that those, who take into view the situation of the whole,

whole, will not expose him to useless hazards, or neglect those precautions, which the safety and advantage of the whole may require.

Unfortunately, causes, in addition to those so often stated, existed in a great part of the army, which were but too operative in obstructing the progress of such military sentiments. In New England, from whence the war had, as yet, been principally supported, the zeal excited by the revolution had taken such a direction, as, in a great degree, to abolish those distinctions between the platoon-officers and the soldiers, which are so indispensable to the formation of an army capable of being applied to all the purposes of war. In many instances, these officers, who constitute so important a part of every army, were elected by the men; and a disposition to associate with them on the footing of equality, was a recommendation of much more weight, and frequently conduced much more to the choice, than individual merit. It has been stated, by gentlemen of high rank, that in some instances, those were elected, who agreed to put their pay in mess with the soldiers, and to divide equally with them. Among such officers, the most disgraceful and unmilitary practices frequently prevailed; and the privates could not sufficiently respect them, to acquire habits of obedience and subordination.

These defects had been, in some degree, reme-

died, in new modelling the army before Boston, but they still existed to a fatal extent; and, in examining the orders of that period, it appears that several officers of inferior rank were not, themselves, exempt from the general spirit of pillage and plunder, which at that time disgraced the American troops; and which will disgrace all troops not subjected to an exact and rigid discipline, but particularly those who have not been officered with care.

CHAPTER VIII.

Skirmish on the Heights of Haerlem—the Enemy land at Frog's Neck—the American Army evacuates York Island, except Fort Washington—both Armies move towards the White Plains—the British Army returns to Kingsbridge—General Washington, with a Part of his Army, crosses the North River—the Lines of Fort Washington carried by the Enemy, and the Garrison made Prisoners—Evacuation of Fort Lee—Weakness of the American Army—ineffectual Attempt to raise the Militia—General Washington retreats through Jersey—Capture of General Lee—General Washington crosses the Delaware—Danger of Philadelphia—Battle of Trenton—of Princeton—Firmness of Congress.

THE enemy being now in possession of New York *, stationed a few troops in that place, and took post, with the main body of their army, on

* Soon after New York fell into the hands of the enemy, a fire broke out in the night about eleven o'clock, and continued to rage till the next morning, when it was extinguished by great exertions on the part of the military stationed in the town, after having consumed about one-third of the buildings. It is said to have been purposely set on fire, and several individuals, believed to have perpetrated the act, were precipitated into

York Island, near the American lines. Their right was at Horen's Hook, on the East River, and their left reached the North River, near Blooming Dale; so that their encampment extended quite across the island, which, though about sixteen miles in length, is in this place scarcely two miles wide; and both their flanks were covered by their ships.

The strongest point of the American lines was at Kingsbridge, both sides of which had been carefully fortified, and to which they were very attentive, because it preserved their communication with the continent. They also occupied, in considerable force, M'Gowan's Pass and Morris's Heights, which were fortified, and capable of being defended against superior numbers. On the Heights of Harlem, too, still nearer the enemy, within about a mile and a half of them, a strong detachment was posted in an intrenched camp.

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the flames. It was alleged by the enemy, that the American General had designed to reduce the town to ashes, had he not been compelled to abandon it so precipitately as to render the execution of this intention impracticable, and that the fire was in consequence of this design: but this allegation is founded entirely in mistake. Neither the Congress nor General Washington had formed so destructive a plan; and the fire must either have been kindled by individuals, whose misguided zeal induced them to adopt so terrible a measure, or by flagitious incendiaries, who hoped to plunder, in security, during the confusion of extinguishing the flames.

The

The present position of the armies was extremely favourable to the views of the American General. He wished to habituate his soldiers, by a series of successful skirmishes, to meet the enemy in the field; and he persuaded himself that his detachments, knowing a strong intrenched camp was immediately in their rear, would engage the enemy without apprehension, would display their native courage, and would soon regain the confidence they appeared to have lost.

Opportunities of this sort could not long be wanting. The day after the retreat from New York, the enemy appeared in considerable force in the plains between the two camps; and the General immediately rode to his advanced posts, in order to make, in person, such arrangements as their movement might require. Soon after his arrival, Lieutenant Colonel Knowlton, of Connecticut, a very brave and valuable officer, who had been skirmishing with them, at the head of a corps of rangers, composed of volunteers from different New England regiments, came in, and, on conjecture, stated the number of the British party, the main body of which was concealed in a wood, at about three hundred men.

The General ordered Colonel Knowlton, with his rangers, and Major Leitch, with three companies of the third Virginia regiment, which had joined the army only the preceding day, to endea-

vour to get in their rear, while he amused them with the appearance of making dispositions to attack their front.

This plan succeeded. The enemy ran eagerly down a hill, in order to possess themselves of some fences and bushes, which they considered as an advantageous position to take against the party advancing in their front; and a firing ensued, but at too great a distance to do any execution. In the mean time, Colonel Knowlton, not being precisely acquainted with their new position, commenced his attack rather on their flank than rear, and a very warm action ensued.

In a short time, Major Leitch, who had very gallantly led on the detachment, was brought off the ground mortally wounded, having received three balls through his body; and, not long afterwards, Colonel Knowlton also fell, bravely fighting at the head of his troops. Yet the Captains, with their companies, kept their ground, and, with much animation, continued the action. The British were reinforced; and General Washington, perceiving the necessity of supporting the Americans also, ordered to their aid some detachments from the adjacent regiments of New England and Maryland. Thus reinforced, they charged the enemy with great intrepidity, drove them out of the woods into the plain, and were pressing them still further, when the General, content with

the

the present advantage, and apprehending that a much larger body of the enemy would soon change the aspect of affairs, called back his troops to their intrenchments.

In this sharp conflict, in which they had engaged a battalion of light infantry, another of Highlanders, and three companies of Hessian riflemen *, the Americans had about fifty men killed and wounded; while the enemy lost more than double that number. But the real importance of the affair was derived from its operation on the spirits of the whole army. It was the first success they had experienced this campaign; and its influence was very discernible. To give it the more effect, the patrole, the next day, was Leitch; and the General, in his orders, publickly thanked the troops, under the command of that officer, who had first advanced on the enemy, and the others, who had so resolutely supported them. He contrasted their conduct with that which had been exhibited the day before, and the result, he said, evidenced what might be done, where officers and soldiers would exert themselves. Once more, therefore, he called on them so to act as not to disgrace the noble cause in which they were engaged, but to support the honour and liberties of their country.

* Ann. Reg.—Stedman.

He appointed a successor to "the gallant and brave Colonel Knowlton, who would," he said, "have been an honour to any country, and who had fallen gloriously fighting at his post."

In this active state of the campaign, when the utmost stretch of every faculty was required, to watch and counteract the plans of the enemy, the effects of the original errors committed by the Government, in its military establishment, were beginning to be so seriously felt, as to induce the Commander in Chief to devote a portion of his time and attention to the complete removal of the causes which produced them.

The situation of America was now becoming extremely critical. The almost entire dissolution of the existing army, by the expiration of the time for which the greater number of the troops had been engaged, was fast approaching. No steps had been taken to recruit the new regiments, resolved on by Congress, for the ensuing campaign; and there was much reason to apprehend, that the terms offered would not, in the actual state of things, hold forth sufficient inducements to fill them.

With so unpromising a prospect before him, the General found himself pressed by an army permanent in its establishment, supplied with every requisite for war, formidable for its discipline and the experience of its leaders, and superior to him,

even

even at present, in numbers. These circumstances, and the impressions they created, will be best exhibited by inserting an extract from a letter written at the time to Congress: it is in these words: "From the hours allotted to sleep, I will borrow a few moments, to convey my thoughts, on sundry important matters, to Congress. I shall give them with that sincerity which ought to characterise a man of candour, and with the freedom which may be used in giving useful information, without incurring the imputation of presumption.

"We are now, as it were, upon the eve of another dissolution of our army. The remembrance of the difficulties which happened upon that occasion last year; the consequences which might have followed the change, if proper advantages had been taken by the enemy; added to a knowledge of the present temper and situation of the troops; reflect but a very gloomy prospect upon the appearance of things now; and satisfy me, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that, unless some speedy and effectual measures are adopted by Congress, our cause will be lost.

"It is in vain to expect that any, or more than a trifling part of this army, will engage again in the service, on the encouragement offered by Congress. When men find that their townsmen and companions are receiving twenty, thirty, and more

more dollars, for a few months' service (which is truly the case,) this cannot be expected, without using compulsion; and to force them into the service would answer no valuable purpose. When men are irritated, and their passions inflamed, they fly hastily and cheerfully to arms; but, after the first emotions are over, to expect, among such people as compose the bulk of an army, that they are influenced by any other principles than those of interest, is to look for what never did, and, I fear, never will happen; the Congress will deceive themselves, therefore, if they expect it.

"A soldier, reasoned with upon the goodness of the cause he is engaged in, and the inestimable rights he is contending for, hears you with patience, and acknowledges the truth of your observations; but adds, that it is of no more consequence to him than to others. The officer makes you the same reply, with this further remark, that his pay will not support him, and he cannot ruin himself and family to serve his country, when every member of the community is equally benefitted and interested by his labours. The few, therefore, who act upon principles of disinterestedness, are, comparatively speaking, no more than a drop in the ocean. It becomes evidently clear, then, that, as this contest is not likely to be the work of a day; as the war must be carried on systematically, and to do it, you must have good officers;

officers; there is, in my judgment, no other possible means to obtain them, but by establishing your army upon a permanent footing, and giving your officers good pay: this will induce gentlemen, and men of character, to engage; and until the bulk of your officers are composed of such persons as are actuated by principles of honour and a spirit of enterprise, you have little to expect from them. They ought to have such allowances as will enable them to live like, and support the characters of, gentlemen, and not to be driven, by a scanty pittance, to the low and dirty arts which many of them practise, to filch the public of more than the difference of pay would amount to, upon an ample allowance. Besides, something is due to the man who puts his life in your hands, hazards his health, and forsakes the sweets of domestic enjoyments. Why a captain, in the continental service, should receive no more than five shillings, currency, per day, for performing the same duties that an officer of the same rank in the British service receives ten shillings sterling for, I never could conceive, especially when the latter is provided with every necessary he requires, upon the best terms, and the former can scarcely procure them at any rate. There is nothing that gives a man consequence, and renders him fit for command, like a support that renders him independent of every body but the state he serves.

"With

"With respect to the men, nothing but a good bounty can obtain them upon a permanent establishment; and for no shorter time than the continuance of the war ought they to be engaged, as facts incontestibly prove, that the difficulty and cost of enlistments increase with time. When the army was first raised at Cambridge, I am persuaded the men might have been got without a bounty for the war: after that, they began to see that the contest was not likely to end so speedily as was imagined, and to feel their consequence, by remarking, that, to get their militia in, in the course of last year, many towns were induced to give them a bounty. Forseeing the evils resulting from this, and the destructive consequences which would unavoidably follow short enlistments, I took the liberty, in a long letter, (date not now recollected, as my letter-book is not here,) to recommend the enlistments for, and during the war, assigning such reasons for it as experience has since convinced me were well founded. At that time, twenty dollars would, I am persuaded, have engaged the men for this term; but it will not do to look back, and, if the present opportunity is slipped, I am persuaded that twelve months more will increase our difficulties fourfold. I shall therefore take the liberty of giving it as my opinion, that a good bounty be immediately offered, aided by the proffer of, at least, a hundred or a

hundred.

hundred and fifty acres of land, and a suit of clothes and a blanket, to each non-commissioned officer and soldier; as I have good authority for saying, that, however high the men's pay may appear, it is barely sufficient, in the present scarcity and dearness of all kinds of goods, to keep them in clothes, much less to afford support to their families. If this encouragement, then, is given to the men, and such pay allowed to the officers as will induce gentlemen of liberal character and liberal sentiments to engage, and proper care and caution be used in the nomination, (having more regard to the character of persons, than the number of men they can enlist,) we should, in a little time, have an army able to cope with any that can be opposed to it, as there are excellent materials to form one out of. But whilst the only merit an officer possesses is his ability to raise men; while these men consider and treat him as an equal, and, in the character of an officer, regard him no more than a broom-stick, being mixed together as one common herd; no order nor discipline can prevail, nor will the officer ever meet with that respect which is essentially necessary to due subordination.

"To place any dependence upon militia is assuredly resting upon a broken staff. Men, just dragged from the tender scenes of domestic life, unaccustomed to the din of arms, totally unacquainted with every kind of military skill, which, being

being followed by a want of confidence in themselves, when opposed to troops regularly trained, disciplined, and appointed, superior in knowledge, and superior in arms, make them timid, and ready to fly from their own shadows. Besides, the sudden change in their manner of living, particularly in their lodging, brings on sickness in many, impatience in all, and such an unconquerable desire of returning to their respective homes, that it not only produces shameful and scandalous desertions among themselves, but infuses the like spirit in others. Again, men accustomed to unbounded freedom and no control, cannot brook the restraint which is indispensably necessary to the good order and government of an army, without which, licentiousness and every kind of disorder triumphantly reign. To bring men to a proper degree of subordination, is not the work of a day, a month, or a year; and, unhappily for us and the cause we are engaged in, the little discipline I have been labouring to establish in the army under my immediate command, is in a manner done away, by having such a mixture of troops as have been called together within these few months.

"Relaxed and unfit as our rules and regulations of war are for the government of an army, the militia (those properly so called, for of these we have two sorts, the six months' men, and those sent in as a temporary aid,) do not think themselves sub-

ect to them, and therefore take liberties which the soldier is punished for. This creates jealousy, jealousy begets dissatisfaction, and these by degrees ripen into mutiny, keeping the whole army in a confused and disordered state, rendering the time of those who wish to see regularity and good order prevail, more unhappy than words can describe; besides this, such repeated changes take place, that all arrangement is set at nought, and the constant fluctuation of things deranges every plan as fast as it is adopted.

"These, Sir, Congress may be assured, are but a small part of the inconveniences which might be enumerated, and attributed to militia; but there is one that merits particular attention, and that is the expense. Certain I am, that it would be cheaper to keep fifty or a hundred thousand men in constant pay, than to depend upon half the number, and supply the other half occasionally by militia. The time the latter is in pay, before and after they are in camp; assembling and marching; the waste of ammunition; the consumption of stores, which, in spite of every resolution and requisition of Congress, they must be furnished with, or sent home; added to other incidental expenses, consequent upon their coming and conduct in camp; surpass every idea, and destroy every kind of regularity and economy which you could establish among fixed and settled troops; and will, in my opinion,

prove,

prove, if the scheme is adhered to, the ruin of our cause.

"The jealousies of a standing army, and the evils to be apprehended from one, are remote; and, in my judgment, situated and circumstanced as we are, not at all to be dreaded; but the consequence of wanting one, according to my ideas, founded upon the present view of things, is certain and inevitable ruin; for, if I was called upon to declare upon oath, whether the militia have been most serviceable or hurtful, upon the whole, I should subscribe to the latter. I do not mean by this, however, to arraign the conduct of Congress; in so doing, I should equally condemn my own measures, if not my judgment: but experience, which is the best criterion to work by, so fully, clearly, and decisively, reprobates the practice of trusting to militia, that no man, who regards order, regularity, and economy, or who has any regard for his own honour, character, or peace of mind, will risk them upon militia."

Congress had already determined, that the men, enlisted in future, should be engaged during the war; and the resolution to that effect was received soon after the dispatch of this letter: but sufficient inducements to secure the execution of their resolutions, had not, in the opinion of the General, been held forth to either officers or soldiers: and on this subject he again thus addressed them:

"Before

"Before I knew of the late resolutions of Congress, which you did me the honour to enclose in your letter of the twenty-fourth, and before I was favoured with the visit of your committee, I took the liberty of giving you my sentiments on several points which seemed to be of importance.

"I have no doubt but that the committee will make such report of the state and condition of the army, as will induce Congress to believe, that nothing but the most vigorous exertions can put matters upon such a footing as to give this continent a fair prospect of success. Give me leave to say, Sir, (I say it with due deference and respect, and my knowledge of the facts, added to the importance of the cause, and the stake I hold in it, must justify the freedom,) that your affairs are in a more unpromising way than you seem to apprehend.

"Your army, as mentioned in my last, is upon the eve of its political dissolution. True it is, you have voted a larger one in lieu of it; but the season is late; and there is a material difference between voting battalions and raising men. In the latter there are more difficulties than Congress seem aware of; which makes it my duty (as I have been informed of the prevailing sentiments of this army) to inform them, that, unless the pay of the officers, especially that of the field-officers, be raised, the chief part of those that are worth retaining will leave the service at the expiration of the present term; as the

soldiers will also, if some greater encouragement is not offered them, than twenty dollars and one hundred acres of land.

"Nothing less, in my opinion, than a suit of clothes, annually given to each non-commissioned officer and soldier, in addition to the pay and bounty, will avail; and I question whether that will do, as the enemy, from the information of one John Marsh, who, with six others, was taken by our guards, are giving ten pounds bounty for recruits, and have got a battalion under Major Rodgers, nearly completed, upon Long Island.

"Nor will less pay, according to my judgment, than I have taken the liberty of mentioning in the enclosed estimate, retain such officers as we could wish to have continued; the difference per month, in each battalion, would amount to better than one hundred pounds. To this may be added the pay of the staff-officers; for, it is presumable, they will also require an augmentation; but, being few in number, the sum will not be greatly increased by them, and, consequently, is a matter of no great moment: but it is a matter of no small importance to make the several offices desirable. When the pay and establishment of an officer once become objects of interested attention, the sloth, negligence, and even disobedience of orders, which at this time but too generally prevail, will be purged off. But, while the service is viewed with indifference; while the officer conceives

that he is rather conferring, than receiving an obligation; there will be a total relaxation of all order and discipline, and every thing will move heavily on, to the great detriment of the service, and inexpressible trouble and vexation of the General.

"The critical situation of our affairs at this time, will justify my saying, that no time is to be lost in making fruitless experiments. An unavailing trial of a month, to get an army upon the terms proposed, may render it impracticable to do it at all, and prove fatal to our cause, as I am not sure whether any rubs in the way of our enlistments, or unfavourable turn in our affairs, may not prove the means of the enemy's recruiting men faster than we do. To this may be added, the inextricable difficulty of forming one corps out of another, and arranging matters with any degree of order, in the face of any enemy who are watching for advantages.

"At Cambridge, last year, where the officers (and more than a sufficiency of them) were all upon the spot, we found it a work of such extreme difficulty to know their sentiments, (each having some terms to propose,) that I despaired once of getting the arrangement completed, and do suppose, that at least a hundred alterations took place before matters were finally adjusted. What must it be, then, under the present regulation, where the officer is to negociate this matter with the state he comes from, distant, perhaps, two or three hundred

miles, some of whom, without any license from me, set out to make personal application, the moment the resolution got to their hands? What kind of officers these are, I leave Congress to judge.

"If an officer of reputation (for none other should be applied to) is asked to stay, what answer can he give, but, in the first place, that he does not know whether it is at his option to do so, no provision being made in the resolution of Congress, even recommendatory of this measure; consequently, that it rests with the state he comes from (surrounded, perhaps, with a variety of applications, and influenced perhaps with local attachments,) to determine whether he can be provided for or not? In the next place, if he is an officer of merit, and knows that the state he comes from is to furnish more battalions than it at present has in service, he will scarcely, after two years' faithful services, think of continuing in the rank he now bears, when new creations are to be made, and men appointed to offices (nowise superior in merit, and ignorant of service, perhaps,) over his head.

"A committee sent to the army from each state, may, upon the spot, fix things with a degree of propriety and certainty, and is the only method I can see, of bringing measures to a decision with respect to the officers of the army: but what can be done, in the mean time, towards the arrangement in the country, I know not. In the one case, you run the

the hazard of losing your officers; in the other, of encountering delay, unless some method could be devised of forwarding both at the same instant.

"Upon the present plan, I plainly foresee an intervention of time between the old and new army, which must be filled with militia, if to be had, with whom no man, who has any regard for his own reputation, can undertake to be answerable for consequences. I shall also be mistaken in my conjectures, if we do not lose the most valuable officers in this army, under the present mode of appointing them: consequently, if we have an army at all, it will be composed of materials not only entirely raw, but, if uncommon pains are not taken, entirely unfit: and I see such a distrust and jealousy of military power, that the Commander in Chief has not an opportunity, even by recommendation, to give the least assurances of reward for the most essential services.

"In a word, such a cloud of perplexing circumstances appears before me, without one flattering hope, that I am thoroughly convinced, unless the most vigorous and decisive exertions are immediately adopted to remedy these evils, that the certain and absolute loss of our liberties will be the inevitable consequence, as one unhappy stroke will throw a powerful weight into the scale against us, and enable General Howe to recruit his army as fast as we shall ours, numbers being disposed, and

many actually doing so already. Some of the most probable remedies, and such as experience has brought to my more intimate knowledge, I have taken the liberty to point out; the rest I beg leave to submit to the consideration of Congress.

"I ask pardon for taking up so much of their time with my opinions, but I should betray that trust which they and my country have reposed in me, were I to be silent upon matters so extremely interesting."

On receiving this very serious letter, it was resolved, that the pay of the officers should be raised according to the wishes of the General; and that it should be recommended to the legislatures of those states having any regiments now in the continental service, either at New York, Ticonderoga, or New Jersey, forthwith to depute committees to those places, in order to appoint officers to the regiments to be raised under the new establishments, that they might re-enlist those men, now in service, who should incline to engage for the war. They also recommended to these committees, in making these appointments, to advise with the General, and to promote such officers as had distinguished themselves for abilities, activity, and vigilance, and more especially for their attention to military discipline; and not to appoint any officer who should leave his station in the army, and be absent without leave. On further reflection,

tion, they added another recommendation, which manifests the sense they entertained of the ill consequences of the pernicious mode of creating officers, originally adopted. It was, that all the officers to be appointed be men of honour* and known

* In a very long and confidential letter to Governor Henry, of Virginia, the Commander in Chief, when adverting to the additional regiments to be raised in that state, thus pressed the necessity of selecting, with care, the officers to be appointed to them.

"I imagine, before this, Congress have made you acquainted with their resolutions for raising the new army, and that your colony is to furnish fifteen battalions, to be enlisted during the war. As it will occasion the choosing a number of new officers, I would, in the most urgent manner, recommend the utmost care and circumspection in your several appointments. I do not expect that there are many experienced gentlemen now left with you, as, from what I have understood, those who served in the last war are chiefly promoted; however, I am satisfied, that the military spirit runs so high in your colony, and that the number of applicants will be so considerable, that a very proper choice may be made. Indeed, the army being put upon such a permanent footing, will be a strong inducement for them to step forth on the present interesting occasion. One circumstance in this important business ought to be cautiously guarded against, and that is, the soldier and officer being too nearly on a level. Discipline and subordination add life and vigour to military movements. The person commanded yields but a reluctant obedience to those he conceives undeservedly made his superiors. The degrees of rank are frequently transferred from civil life into the departments of the army. The true criterion

known abilities, without a particular regard to their having before been in service. In addition to the pay of the privates, a suit of regimentals was allowed them annually; and the states, as far as Virginia, were urged to use their utmost endeavours to complete their quotas.

The armies did not long retain their position on York Island. General Howe was sensible of the strength of the American camp, and had no inclination to force it. His plan was to compel General Washington either to abandon it, or to fight him in a situation in which a defeat must be attended with the total destruction of his army. With this view, he determined, after throwing up intrenchments on M'Gowan's Hill, for the protection of New York, to gain the rear of the American camp, by the New England Road, along which their principal supplies of provisions were received, and also to possess himself of the North River, above Kingsbridge. To assure himself of the

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to judge by, when past services do not enter into the competition, is, to consider whether the candidate for office has a just pretension to the character of a gentleman, a proper sense of honour, and some reputation to lose.

"Perhaps, Sir, you may be surprised at my pressing this advice so strongly as I have done in this letter; but I have felt the inconveniences resulting from a contrary principle in so sensible a manner, and this army has been so greatly enfeebled by a different line of conduct, that I hope you will readily excuse me."

practi-

practicability of this plan, so far as respected the river, three frigates passed up it, under the fire from Fort Washington, and the post opposite to it on the Jersey shore, afterwards denominated Fort Lee, without sustaining any injury from the batteries, or being at all impeded by the *chevaux-de-frize* which had been sunk in the channel between those forts*.

This point being attained, he, in pursuance of his plan, either to force Washington out of his present lines, or to enclose him in them, embarked a great part of his army on board flat-bottomed boats, and, passing through Hellgate into the Sound, landed at Frogs Neck, not far from West Chester, on the east or Connecticut side of the Sound, and about nine miles from the camp on the Heights of Haerlam.

Frogs Neck is completely surrounded by the water, which, at flood-tide, is unfordable; so that it is, in fact, an island, communicating with the main land by bridges thrown over the intervening water. These bridges were broken down by the

* The command of the upper part of the river, at all times important to the military operations in that quarter, was rendered peculiarly interesting, by the certain information that a very great proportion of the inhabitants were in the royal interest, and were actually meditating an insurrection, for the purpose of seizing the posts in the high lands; to prevent which, the militia of New Hampshire were ordered to Fishkill.

Americans,

Americans, and works were immediately thrown up to obstruct the march of the enemy, from their present encampment, into the country. General Washington, who was well aware of the intention with which General Howe had taken this new position, moved a part of his troops from York Island, to join those at Kingsbridge; and detached some regiments to West Chester, for the purpose of opposing and skirmishing with the enemy, so soon as they should march from their present station. The road from Frogs Point to Kingsbridge leads through a strong country, intersected in every direction by numerous stone fences, so that it would have been very difficult to move artillery, or even infantry in compact columns, except along the main road, which had been broken up in several places. The General, therefore, entertained sanguine hopes of the event, should a direct attack be made on his present camp.

General Howe continued some days quietly waiting for his artillery, military-stores, and reinforcements, from Staten Island, which were detained by an unfavourable wind, during which it was impracticable to pass from the East River into the Sound.

In the mean time, as the habits of thinking, in America, absolutely required that every important measure should be the result of consultation, and should receive the approbation of a majority, a council

council of general officers was called, and the propriety of removing the American army from its present position laid before them. The obstructions in the North River having proved insufficient to stop the ships, and the British having landed in full force at Frogs Neck, on the east of the Sound, it was, after much investigation, declared to be impracticable, without a change of position, to prevent the enemy from cutting off their communication with the country, and compelling them either to fight under great disadvantages, or to surrender themselves prisoners of war. General Lee, who had but two days before joined the grand army, and whose experience, as well as his late success, gave him great weight, maintained this opinion with peculiar earnestness; and General Clinton was the only officer who dissented from it. At the same time, it was determined still to hold Fort Washington, and to defend that post as long as possible. The hope was still cherished, that, by increasing the obstructions in the river, ships might be prevented from passing them; and the object was deemed so all-important, as to justify considerable hazard in the attempt to secure it. The resolution of Congress, of the eleventh of October, desiring General Washington, by every art and expense, to obstruct, if possible, the navigation of the river, contributed not inconsiderably to the determination for maintaining this post.

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The necessary measures were now taken for moving the army, so as to extend its front, or left, up the North River towards the White Plains, beyond the right of the enemy, and thus keep perfectly open its communication with the country. The right or rear division remained a few days about Kingsbridge, under the command of General Lee, in order to cover and secure the heavy baggage and military stores, which, in consequence of the extreme difficulty of obtaining waggons, could be but slowly removed to a place of safety.

Having received the expected reinforcements, which landed at Pell's Point, to which place he also transported the troops from Frogs Neck, and brought up his military stores, General Howe moved forward his whole army, except four brigades, destined for the defence of New York, through Pelham's Manor, towards New Rochelle. Some skirmishes took place on the march, near East Chester, with a part of Glover's brigade, in which the conduct of the Americans was mentioned with satisfaction by the Commander in Chief; and, as General Howe took post at New Rochelle, a village on the Sound, General Washington occupied the heights between that place and the North River.

At New Rochelle the British army was joined by the second division of Germans, under the command of General Knyphausen, and by an incomplete

complete regiment of cavalry from Ireland; some of whom, with one of the transports, had been captured on their passage. Both armies now moved towards the White Plains, a strong piece of ground where a large camp had been marked out, and was already occupied by a detachment of militia, sent for the particular purpose of guarding some magazines of provisions which had been collected there. The main body of the American troops formed a long line of intrenched camps, extending from twelve to thirteen miles, on the different heights from Valentine's Hill, near Kingsbridge, to the White Plains, fronting the British line of march, and the Brunx, which lay between them, so as to collect in full force at any point, as circumstances might require. The motions of the enemy were anxiously watched, not only for the purposes of security, and of avoiding a general action, but in order to seize every occasion which might present itself of engaging any of their outposts with advantage. While their army lay about New Rochelle, Major Rodgers, with his regiment, was advanced further eastward, to Mamara Neck, on the Sound, where he was believed to be in a great degree covered by the position of the other troops. An attempt was made to surprise him in the night, by a detachment which should pass between him and the main body of the British army, and, by a *coup de main*, bear off his whole corps.

Although

Although the plan was well formed, and Major Rodgers was actually surprised, yet the attempt did not completely succeed. About sixty of the enemy were killed and taken; and about the same number of muskets, with several blankets, were brought off. The loss of the Americans was only two killed and eight or ten wounded: among the latter, was Major Green, of Virginia, a very brave officer, who led the advanced party, and who received a ball through his body.

Not long afterwards, a regiment of Pennsylvania riflemen, under Colonel Hand, fell in with and engaged about an equal number of Hessian chasseurs, over whom they obtained some advantage.

The caution of the English General was increased by these evidences of enterprise in his adversary. His object seems to have been to avoid skirmishing, and to bring on a general action, if that could be effected under favourable circumstances; if not, he knew well the approaching dissolution of the American army, and calculated, not without reason, to derive from that event nearly all the advantages of a victory. He proceeded, therefore, slowly; his marches were in close order; his encampments compact, and well guarded with artillery; and the utmost circumspection was used not to expose any part which might be vulnerable.

As the sick and baggage reached a place of safety, General Washington gradually drew in his out-

out-posts, and took possession of the heights on the east side of the Brunx, fronting the head of the enemy's columns. The next day he was joined by General Lee, who, with very considerable address, had brought up the rear division, after the sick and the whole baggage of the army had been secured; an operation the more difficult, as the deficiency of teams was very great; in consequence of which, a large portion of the labour usually performed by horses, or oxen, devolved on men.

General Washington was encamped on high broken grounds, with his right flank covered by the Brunx, which meandered so as also to cover the front of his right wing, which extended along the road leading down on the east side of that river, towards New Rochelle, as far as the brow of the hill where his centre was posted. His left, which formed almost a right angle with his centre, and was nearly parallel to his right, extended along the hills northwardly, so as to keep possession of the commanding ground, and secure a retreat, should it be necessary, from his present position, to one still more advantageous in his rear.

On the right of the army, and on the west side of the Brunx, about one mile from camp, on the road leading from the North River, was a hill, of which General M'Dougal was ordered to take possession, for the purpose of covering the right flank. His detachment consisted of about sixteen hundred

hundred men, principally militia, and his communication with the main army was perfectly open, that part of the river being every where passable without any difficulty.

Hasty intrenchments were thrown up to strengthen, as much as time would admit, every part of the lines, and make them as defensible as possible.

The enemy, who had advanced from New Rochelle and Mamara Neck, and were within seven or eight miles of the White Plains, now made arrangements to attack General Washington in his camp. Early in the morning, they advanced in two columns, the right commanded by Sir Henry Clinton, and the left by General Knyphausen, accompanied by General Howe in person. Their advanced parties having encountered and driven in the patrols they fell in with on the march, their van appeared, about ten o'clock, in full view of the American lines; and a cannonade commenced, without much execution on either side.

The right of the enemy formed behind a rising ground about a mile in front of the camp, and extended from the road leading from Mamara Neck towards the Brunx; so that it was opposed to the centre of the American army.

On viewing General Washington's situation, General Howe determined to possess himself of the hill occupied by M'Dougal, which he consi-

dered as important to the success of an attack on the centre and right of the American camp. He therefore directed Colonel Rawle, with a brigade of Hessians which he commanded, to cross the Brunx, and make a circuit, so as to gain a position from which he might annoy the right flank of General M'Dougal; while Brigadier General Leslie, with the second brigade of British troops, the Hessian grenadiers under Colonel Donop, and a Hessian battalion, should attack him in front. When Colonel Rawle had gained the position he had been ordered to take, the detachment under the command of General Leslie also crossed the Brunx, and commenced a very vigorous attack on the Americans *. The militia immediately fled, but the attack was sustained by the regulars with great gallantry. Colonel Smallwood's regiment of Maryland, and Colonel Reitzemar's of New York, advanced boldly towards the foot of the hill to meet them; but after a sharp encounter, those regiments were overpowered by numbers, and compelled to retreat. The enemy advanced with great resolution on the remaining part of M'Dougal's forces, consisting of his own brigade, the Delaware battalion, and a small regiment of Connecticut militia, who were soon driven from the hill, but who kept up for some time an irregular

* Letter of General Howe.

engagement from the stone walls and other enclosures about the scene of action. General Putnam, with General Beal's brigade, was ordered to their support; but not having arrived while they were in possession of the hill, it was deemed improper to attempt to regain it, and the troops retreated to the main army.

In this engagement, which, during its continuance, was very animated on both sides, the loss was supposed to have been about equal. That of the Americans was between three and four hundred, in killed, wounded, and taken. Colonel Smallwood was among the wounded.

General Washington continued in his lines, expecting an attack; to prepare for which, his sick and baggage were removed into his rear: but as a considerable part of the day had been exhausted in gaining the hill which had been occupied by M'Dougal, all attempts on his intrenchments were postponed until the next morning, and the whole British army lay on their arms the following night, in order of battle, and on the ground they had taken during the day.

The night was employed by General Washington in strengthening his works, removing his sick and baggage, and preparing, by changing the arrangement of his troops, for the expected attack. His left maintained its position, but his right was drawn back to stronger ground. Perceiving this, and being

being unwilling to leave any thing to hazard, Howe resolved to postpone further offensive operations till Lord Percy should arrive with four battalions from New York, and two from the post at Mamara Neck. This reinforcement was received on the evening of the thirtieth, and preparations were then made for the attack next morning. In the night, however, and during the early part of the succeeding day, a violent rain fell, which induced a further postponement of the assault*. The provisions and heavy baggage of the army being now removed to much stronger ground, and apprehending that the enemy, whose left wing, on the height taken from General M'Dougal, extended to his rear, might turn his camp, and occupy the strong grounds to which he designed to retreat, if an attempt on his lines should terminate unfortunately, General Washington changed his position in the night, and withdrew to the heights of North Castle, about five miles from the White Plains. At the same time he detached General Beal's brigade to take possession of the bridge on Croton River, which lay a few miles in his rear, and over which is the road leading up the Hudson.

His present position was so strong, that an attempt to force it was deemed imprudent; and General Howe determined to change entirely his plan

* Letter of General Howe.

of operations, and to give a new direction to his efforts *.

It has been already stated, that the anxiety to preserve, if possible, the navigation of the Hudson above Kingsbridge, had induced the American General to maintain the posts of Forts Washington and Lee, on both sides that river. These posts, while held by the Americans, checked very essentially the movements of General Howe, who very justly deemed the complete possession of York Island an object of too much importance to be longer neglected. With a view to the acquisition of them, he directed General Knyphausen to cross the country from New Rochelle, and to take possession of Kingsbridge, where a small party of Americans were stationed in Fort Independence. This he effected without opposition. On his approach, the Americans retired to Fort Washington; and Knyphausen entered York Island, and encamped to the north of Fort Washington, between that place and Kingsbridge.

In the mean time, General Howe broke up his camp at the White Plains, and marched to Dobb's Ferry, from whence he retired slowly down the North River towards Kingsbridge. The American General was immediately aware of his views on Fort Washington and the Jerseys; but apprehend-

* Letter of General Howe.

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ing the possibility of his returning suddenly, and endeavouring by a rapid movement to execute the original plan of getting in his rear, he observed great caution, and maintained his position about the White Plains, till he was assured, by the information given by the parties detached to watch the enemy and harass him on his march, that the movement towards Kingsbridge was not a feint.

As, on the first movement of the British army towards New York, General Washington had perceived the necessity of throwing a part of his troops into New Jersey, should the design of the enemy be, as he apprehended, to change the scene of action, a council of war was immediately called. In this council it was determined unanimously, that should General Howe continue his march towards New York, all the troops raised on the west side of the Hudson should cross that river, to be afterwards followed by the eastern troops, should the operations of the enemy render it necessary. For the preservation of the high lands about the North River, three thousand men were to be stationed at Peckskill, and in the passes of the mountains.

In a letter to Congress, communicating the present movement of the enemy, and the determination of the Council, the General said, "I cannot indulge the idea that General Howe, supposing him to be going to New York, means to close the campaign, and to sit down without attempting

something more. I think it highly probable, and almost certain, that he will make a descent, with part of his troops, into the Jerseys; and, as soon as I am satisfied that the present manœuvre is real, and not a feint, I shall use all the means in my power to forward a part of our force to counteract his designs.

"I expect the enemy will bend their force against Fort Washington, and invest it immediately. From some advices, it is an object that will attract their earliest attention."

He also addressed a letter to Mr. Livingston, the Governor of New Jersey, advising him of the movement made by the enemy; and giving it as his decided opinion, that General Howe would not content himself with investing Fort Washington, but would incontestibly invade the Jerseys. He urged him to put the militia in the best possible condition, to reinforce the continental army, and take the place of the new levies, a term designating a body of men between militia and regulars, raised under the resolution of Congress to serve till the first of December, and who could not be depended on to continue with the army one day longer than the time for which they were engaged. He also pressed very earnestly the removal, from the sea-coast and the neighbourhood of New York, of all the stock and other provisions, of which the enemy might avail himself.

Imme-

Immediate intelligence of this movement was likewise given to General Green, who commanded in the Jerseys, and his attention was particularly called to Fort Washington. He was also advised to increase his magazines about Princeton, and diminish those near New York, as experience had demonstrated the extreme difficulty of removing them on the advance of the enemy. Some apprehension was also entertained that Howe would attempt to cross at Dobb's Ferry, and envelope the troops about Fort Lee, as well as Fort Washington. Of this, too, General Green was advised, who thereupon drew in his parties from about Amboy, and posted a body of troops on the heights, to defend the passage at Dobb's Ferry.

As the British army approached Kingsbridge, three of their ships of war passed up the North River, by the Forts Washington and Lee, notwithstanding their fire, and notwithstanding the additional obstructions which had been placed in the channel.

On being informed of this, another letter was addressed to General Green, in which it was stated, that this fact was so plain a proof of the inefficacy of all the obstructions thrown in the river, as to justify a change in the dispositions which had been made. "If," proceeds the letter, "we cannot prevent vessels from passing up, and the enemy are possessed of the surrounding country, what

valuable purpose can it answer to attempt to hold a post from which the expected benefit cannot be derived? I am, therefore, inclined to think it will not be prudent to hazard the men and stores at Fort Washington; but, as you are on the spot, I leave it to you to give such orders respecting the evacuation of the place as you may think most advisable, and so far revoke the orders given Colonel M'Gaw to defend it to the last."

He, in this letter, repeated his instructions to drive the stock, and destroy the hay, grain, and other provisions, which the inhabitants would not remove from the coast. "The enemy," he added, "have drawn great relief from the forage and provisions they have found in the country, and which our tenderness had spared. You will do well to prevent their receiving any fresh supplies, by destroying it, if it cannot be removed. Experience has shewn, that a contrary conduct is not of the least advantage to the poor inhabitants, from whom all their effects of every kind are taken, without distinction and without satisfaction."

Measures were now taken, to cross the North River, with the troops which had been raised on its western side; and General Washington himself determined to accompany that division of the army. The eastern regiments remained on the eastern side of the North River, under the command of General Lee, who had orders to join the Commander

Commander in Chief, if the enemy should move the whole, or the greater part of their force to the west of the Hudson. In the mean time, as it was yet thought possible that the enemy might strike at this division of the army, he was advised to retire farther into the country, and to take possession of the strong grounds behind the Croton, at Pines Bridge.

Having visited the posts about Peckskill in the high lands, and made all the arrangements in his power for their defence, an object always deemed of the utmost importance, General Washington passed the North River in the rear of the troops designed to act immediately in the Jerseys, and joined General Green, at his quarters, near Fort Lee.

From too great a confidence in the strength of the post at Fort Washington, and a hope that, by still further increasing the obstructions in the North River, the original object for which that place had been fortified might yet be obtained; from an unwillingness, too, further to discourage the army, by an evacuation of posts, General Green had not withdrawn the garrison under the discretionary orders he had received on that subject; but still indulged a hope that the post might be maintained; or, if its situation should become desperate, that means might then be found to transport the troops across the river to the Jersey shore, which was defended by Fort Lee.

Fort

Fort Washington is on a very high piece of rocky ground, near the North River, very difficult of ascent, especially towards the north, or Kingsbridge. The fort was capable of containing about one thousand men; but the lines and out-works, which were chiefly on the southern side, towards New York, were drawn quite across the island. The ground was naturally very strong, the approaches difficult, and the fortifications, though not sufficient to resist heavy artillery, were believed to be in a condition which would prevent any attempt to carry them by storm. The garrison consisted of troops, some of whom were among the best in the American army, and the command was given to Colonel M'Gaw, a brave and intelligent officer, in whose courage and skill great confidence was placed.

General Howe, who had retired slowly from the White Plains, encamped at a small distance from Kingsbridge, on the heights of Fordham, with his right towards the North River, and his left on the Brunx. Works were erected on Haerlam Creek, to play on the opposite works of the Americans; and every thing being prepared, the garrison was summoned to surrender, on pain of being put to the sword. Colonel M'Gaw replied, that he should defend the place to the last extremity, and the summons he had received was immediately communicated to General Green, at Fort Lee, and by

him to the Commander in Chief, who was then at Hackensac. He immediately rode to Fort Lee, and was proceeding, though it was then late in the night, to Fort Washington, where he expected to find Generals Putnam and Green; when, in crossing the river to Fort Washington, he met those officers returning from visiting that post; they reported that the troops were in high spirits, and would make a good defence, on which he returned with them to Fort Lee.

Early next morning, Colonel M'Gaw posted his troops, partly in the lines drawn across the island on the south of the fort; partly between the lines on the woody and rocky heights fronting the East River, where the works were not closed; and partly on a commanding hill, lying north of the fort; Colonel Cadwallader, of Pennsylvania, commanded in the lines; Colonel Rawlings, of Maryland, commanded on the hill towards Kingsbridge, where his regiment of riflemen was posted among trees, and Colonel M'Gaw himself continued in the fort.

Notwithstanding the strength of the place, the British General resolved to carry it by storm. He was induced to this determination by a wish to save time, which, at this late season of the year, was an object not to be overlooked; and preparations were made for a vigorous attack early in the morning. About ten o'clock the enemy appeared, and moved on to the assault in four different quarters,

quarters. Their first division, consisting of two columns of Hessians and Waldeckers, amounting to about five thousand men, under the command of General Knyphausen, advanced on the north side of the works against the hill where Colonel Rawlings commanded, who received them with great gallantry. The second, on the east, consisting of the first and second battalions of British light infantry, and two battalions of guards, was led on by Brigadier General Matthews, supported by Lord Cornwallis at the head of the first and second battalions of grenadiers, and the 33d regiment. These troops crossed the East River in boats, under cover of the artillery, planted in works which had been erected for this purpose on the opposite side of the river, and landed within the second line of defence which crossed the island. The third division was conducted by Lieutenant Colonel Stirling, who passed the East River lower down; and the fourth by Lord Percy, accompanied by General Howe in person. This division was to attack the lines in front, on the south side *.

The attacks on the north and south, by General Knyphausen and Lord Percy, were made, about the same instant, on Colonels Rawlings and Cadwallader, who maintained their ground for a considerable time; but while Colonel Cadwallader

* Letter of General Howe.

was

was engaged in the first line against Lord Percy on the south, the second and third divisions of the enemy, which had crossed the East River, made good their landing, and soon dispersed the troops fronting that river, as well as a detachment sent by Colonel Cadwallader to support them. These being overpowered, he deemed it necessary to abandon the lines, and a retreat was commenced towards the fort, which being conducted with confusion, a part of his men were intercepted by the division under Colonel Stirling, and made prisoners. The resistance on the north was conducted with more courage, and was of longer duration. Rawlings maintained his ground with firmness, and his riflemen did vast execution. The Germans were repulsed several times with great loss; and had every other part of the action been equally well maintained, the enemy, if ultimately successful, would have had much reason to deplore their victory. The Hessian columns, by dint of perseverance and numbers, at length gained the summit of the hill, and Colonel Rawlings, who perceived the danger which threatened his rear, retreated under the guns of the fort.

Having now carried the lines and all the strong ground adjoining, the British General again summoned Colonel M'Gaw to surrender. While the capitulation was negotiating, General Washington sent him a billet, requesting him to hold out till

the evening, when he would endeavour to bring off the garrison; but Colonel M'Gaw had already proceeded too far to retreat, and it is probable the place could not have resisted an assault from so formidable a force as now threatened it on every side. The most essential difficulties had been overcome, the fort was too small to contain all the men, and their ammunition was nearly exhausted. Under these circumstances, the garrison surrendered prisoners of war.

The loss on this occasion was, perhaps, the greatest the Americans had ever experienced. The garrison was stated, by General Washington, at about two thousand men; yet, in a report published as from General Howe, the number of prisoners is stated at two thousand six hundred, exclusive of officers. If this report were genuine, either General Howe must have included in it persons who were not soldiers, or General Washington, in his letter, must have comprised only the regulars. The last conjecture is most probably correct. The loss of the enemy is stated, by Mr. Stedman, in his history of the war, at about eight hundred men. This loss fell heaviest on the Germans *.

The

* Had the fort towards the East River been defended with as much gallantry as the hill on the north, the enemy would probably have been repulsed, and would eventually have sustained so heavy a loss, as very essentially to have effected their ulterior opera-

The surrender of Fort Washington produced a determination to evacuate Fort Lee, and a removal of the stores to the interior of Jersey was immediately commenced. Before this could be possibly completed, a large body of the enemy, consisting of two battalions of British, three of Hessian grenadiers, two of light infantry, the guards, the chasseurs, the royal Highlanders, the thirty-third regiment, and a detachment of the Queen's light dragoons, conjectured to amount, altogether, to about six thousand men, under Lord Cornwallis, crossed the North River, below Dobb's Ferry, and endeavoured by a rapid march to enclose the garrison of Fort Lee, between the North and Hackensac Rivers. On the first intelligence of their approach, it was determined to meet and fight them; but it was soon discovered that their force was too great to be encountered. It was also perceived that they were extending themselves across the country, so as to surround the Americans. It was, therefore, deemed necessary to withdraw the garrison, with the utmost possible dispatch, from the narrow neck of land between the Hudson and Hackensac; and, with considerable difficulty, their

operations; but, among raw troops, however great the exertions of many may be, there must ever be found a defect of courage in some one point, which must defeat any general plan. This results from the circumstance, that their conduct depends more on individual firmness than on habits of discipline.

retreat

retreat was effected over a bridge on the latter river. At Fort Lee, all the heavy cannon, except two twelve-pounders, and a considerable quantity of provisions and military stores, including three hundred tents, were lost. The great difficulty experienced on this and on all other occasions, in obtaining waggons, for the removal of stores and baggage, rendered this loss inevitable.

General Washington now took post along the Hackensac, but it was impossible to dispute its passage. He was now in a level country, without a single intrenching tool; at the head of an army consisting of about three thousand effectives; exposed, without tents, to the inclement season which already prevailed; among people by no means zealous in the American cause; and, in other respects, his present situation was a dangerous one.

This gloomy state of things was not brightened by the prospect before him. In casting his eyes around, no cheering object presented itself. No safe reliance could be placed on reinforcements to be drawn from any quarter. He, however, made every possible exertion to collect an army, and, in the mean time, to impede, as much as possible, the progress of the enemy. General Carleton having retired from before Ticonderoga, he directed General Schuyler to send to his aid, with the utmost possible dispatch, the troops of Pennsylvania and Jersey, who had been attached to the northern army.

army. But the march was long, their terms of service had nearly expired, and they had refused to re-enlist. General Lee was directed to cross the North River, and to hold himself in readiness, if the enemy should continue the campaign, to join the Commander in Chief*; but his army, too, was melting away, under the influence of the same fatal cause which had acted so universally and so banefully, and would soon be almost totally dissolved.

* "My reasons for this measure," said the Commander in Chief, in his letter to General Lee, ordering him to cross the Hudson, "and which, I think, must have weight with you, are, that the enemy are evidently changing the seat of war to this side of the North River; that this country, therefore, will expect the continental army to give what support they can, and, if disappointed in this, will cease to depend upon or support a force by which no protection is given to them. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that at least an appearance of a force should be made, to keep this state in connexion with the others. If that should not continue, it is much to be feared that its influence on Pennsylvania would be very considerable, and the public interests would be more and more endangered. Unless, therefore, some new event should occur, or some more cogent reason present itself, I would have you move over by the easiest and best passage. I am sensible your numbers will not be large, and that the movement may not, perhaps, be agreeable to your troops. As to the first, report will exaggerate them, and there will be preserved the appearance of an army, which will, at least, have the effect of encouraging the desponding here; and, as to the other, you will, doubtless, represent to them, that in duty and gratitude, their service is due wherever the enemy may make the greatest impression, or seem to intend to do so."

General Mercer, who commanded a part of the flying camp stationed about Bergen, was also called in; but these troops had only engaged to serve till the first day of December; and, like the other six months' men, had already abandoned the army in great numbers. No hope existed of retaining the remnant of them, after they should possess a legal right to be discharged, and very little of supplying their places with other militia.

The present situation of the American army was precisely similar to that it had abandoned, and, of consequence, no serious design of attempting to maintain it, was formed. The Hackensac lay between them and the enemy, and the Passaic was immediately in their rear; so that the danger of being enclosed between two rivers still existed. While, therefore, some regiments were disposed along the Hackensac, so as to afford the semblance of intending to defend it, and thus, for a time, to cover the few stores which could not immediately be removed, General Washington, with Beal's, Heard's, and part of Irvine's brigades, crossed over at Acquackanunc Bridge, and took post at Newark, on the south side of the Passaic. Soon after he had marched, Major General Vaughan appeared at the head of the dragoons, grenadiers, and light infantry, before the new bridge over the Hackensac, and the American detachment, left as a rear-guard, being totally unable to defend it, could only

only break up the bridge, and retire before him, over the Passaic.

On the south side of this river, the country being open behind them, it was determined to halt a few days, to make some show of resistance, and to endeavour to collect such a force as would keep up, at least, the semblance of an army.

The letters of the Commander in Chief not having produced, among the states, such exertions as the public exigencies required, General Miflin, who was believed to possess great influence in Pennsylvania, was directed to attend the government of that state, and to represent the real situation of the army, and the danger to which Philadelphia would certainly be exposed, unless the most vigorous exertions should be made, and such large reinforcements hastened to his aid, as might enable him to stop the enemy in the Jerseys. He also dispatched Colonel Reid, his Adjutant General, to the Governor of New Jersey, to lay before him the critical situation of affairs, and to press upon him the absolute necessity of making further and immediate exertions to prevent the whole state from being entirely over-run by the enemy.

While these means were resorted to, in order to strengthen himself with militia, he pressed General Lee to hasten his march, and cautioned him to keep high enough up the country to prevent his being intercepted by the enemy, who, having got

possession of the mail containing one of his late letters, would certainly endeavour to prevent the junction of the two armies.

In this perilous state of things he found it necessary to detach Colonel Forman, of the New Jersey militia, to suppress an insurrection which threatened to break out in the county of Monmouth, where great numbers were well disposed to the royal cause. Nor was this the only place from which there was reason to apprehend the enemy might derive aid. Such an indisposition to further resistance began to be manifested throughout that state, as to excite very serious fears respecting the conduct which might be observed, when the British army should penetrate further into the country.

Being unable to make any real opposition, as the enemy crossed the Passaic, General Washington abandoned his position behind that river; and the day Lord Cornwallis entered Newark, he retreated from that place to Brunswick, a small village on the Raritan. Here the time arrived, when those troops, who were drawn from Maryland and Jersey, to compose the flying camp, became entitled to their discharge; and he had the extreme mortification to see his feeble army still more enfeebled, by their entirely abandoning him, though almost in sight of an advancing enemy. In this critical situation, so many of the Pennsylvania militia, who

who were engaged to serve till the first of January, deserted, that it was deemed necessary to request guards of militia to be placed on the roads and ferries over the Delaware, in order to apprehend and send back to the camp, soldiers who might be found without a written discharge, or a permit to be absent.

Here he again stated to the Governor of New Jersey, that the object of the enemy plainly was to pass through that state to Philadelphia, and urged him once more to adopt some proper and efficacious means for calling out the strength of the state to his support, and to its own defence; without great reinforcements, he assured him it would be impossible to maintain his present position one instant after the enemy should advance upon him. But it was not in the power of the Governor to furnish the aid required. So much of the lower country as was well affected was overawed entirely by the enemy; and the militia of Morris and Sussex turned out very slowly and reluctantly.

Here again he urged General Lee to join him. After mentioning the advance of the enemy, who, without doubt, designed to press on to Philadelphia, he said, "The force I have with me is infinitely inferior in numbers, and such as cannot promise or give the least successful opposition. I must entreat you to hasten your march as much as possible, or your arrival may be too late to answer any valuable

purpose. I can neither particularize your route, nor the place to join me: in these you must be governed by circumstances, and the intelligence you receive: let the former be secure."

At Brunswick, the troops were continued in motion, for the purpose of concealing their weakness, and retarding the advance of the enemy, by creating an opinion that the Americans meditated an attack in turn. From that place, the General even moved some men towards them, as if intending offensive operations, and he continued in the town till they were actually in view; but, as the advanced guards showed themselves on the opposite side of the bridge, he marched out of Brunswick, and, leaving Lord Stirling in Princeton, with two brigades from Virginia and Delaware, consisting of twelve hundred men, to watch the enemy, he proceeded himself, with the residue of the army, to Trenton. He had already directed the boats on the Delaware, from Philadelphia upwards, for seventy miles, to be collected and guarded, so that a hope might be reasonably entertained that the progress of the enemy would be stopped at this river, and that, in the mean time, reinforcements might arrive, which would enable him to dispute its passage.

Having, with great labour, transported the few remaining military stores and baggage over the Delaware, he determined to remain, as long as possible,

sible, with the small force which still adhered to him, on the north side of that river.

The army, which, under the command of General Washington, was thus pressed slowly through the Jerseys, was aided by no other cavalry than a small corps of badly mounted Connecticut militia, commanded by Major Shelden, and was almost equally destitute of artillery. Its numbers at no time during the retreat exceeded four thousand, and was now reduced to less than three thousand men, of whom not quite one thousand were militia, belonging to the state of New Jersey; and even of his regulars there were many whose terms of service were about to expire.

Nor did his weakness, in point of numbers, constitute the only embarrassment of his situation. His regulars were badly armed, worse clad, and almost without tents, blankets, or utensils for dressing their provisions. They were composed chiefly of the garrison drawn from Fort Lee, and had been obliged to evacuate that place with too much precipitation to bring with them even those few articles for their comfort and accommodation with which they had been furnished. He found himself at the head of this small band, dispirited by their losses and fatigues, retreating almost naked and bare-footed, in the cold of November and December, before a numerous, well-appointed, and victorious army, through a desponding coun-

try, much more disposed to secure safety by submission than to seek it by a manly resistance.

In this crisis of American affairs, a proclamation was issued by Lord and General Howe, as Commissioners appointed on the part of the Crown for restoring peace to America, commanding all persons assembled in arms against his Majesty's government to disband and return to their homes; and all civil officers to desist from their treasonable practices, and relinquish their usurped authority. A full pardon was also offered to every person who would, within sixty days, appear before certain civil or military officers of the crown, and claim the benefit of that proclamation; and, at the same time, testify his obedience to the laws, by subscribing a declaration of his submission to the royal authority. Copies of this proclamation were immediately dispersed through the country; after which, numbers flocked in daily, for the purpose of making their peace, and obtaining protection. The contrast between the splendid appearance of the pursuing army, and that made by the ragged Americans, who were flying before them, diminished in numbers, and destitute of almost every necessary, could not fail to contribute to the general opinion, that the contest was approaching its termination.

Among the many valuable traits in the character of General Washington, was that unyielding firm-

ness of mind which resisted these accumulated circumstances of depression, and supported him under them. Undismayed by the dangers which surrounded him, he did not, for an instant, relax his exertions, nor omit any thing which could obstruct the progress of the enemy, or ameliorate his own condition. He did not appear to despair of the public safety, but struggled against adverse fortune, with the hope of yet vanquishing the difficulties which surrounded him; and constantly shewed himself to his harassed and enfeebled army, with a serene unembarrassed countenance, betraying no fears within himself, and invigorating and inspiring with confidence the bosoms of others. To this unconquerable firmness of temper, to this perfect self-possession, under the most desperate circumstances, is America, in a great degree, indebted for her independence.

The baggage and stores were immediately removed to the south side of the Delaware, and the sick sent to Philadelphia. Having accomplished this object, and finding that Lord Cornwallis still continued in Brunswick, he detached twelve hundred men to Princeton, in the hope, that, by appearing to advance on the enemy, he might not only delay their progress, but, in some degree, cover the country, and reanimate the people of Jersey.

A part of this short respite from laborious service was devoted to the predominant wish of his heart, that

that of preparing as far as possible, for the next campaign, by impressing sufficiently on Congress a conviction of the real causes which had produced their present calamities. However the human mind may resist the clearest theoretic reasoning, it is impossible not to discern radical and obvious errors, while smarting under their destructive consequences. The abandonment of the army by whole regiments of the flying camp, in the face of an advancing and superior enemy; the impracticability of calling out the militia of Jersey and Pennsylvania in sufficient force to prevent the enemy from over-running the first state, and from entering the latter, had not other causes saved it; were practical lessons on the subjects of short enlistments and a reliance on militia, which could not fail to add great weight to the remonstrances formerly made by the General on this subject, and which he now repeated.

The exertions of General Miflin, who had been commissioned to raise the militia of Pennsylvania, though they made but very little impression on the state at large, were attended with some degree of success in Philadelphia. A great proportion of the inhabitants of that city, capable of bearing arms, had associated for the defence of their country, and on this occasion fifteen hundred of them marched to Trenton; and a German battalion was also ordered by Congress to the same place. On receiving

ing this reinforcement, amounting to about two thousand men, General Washington commenced his march to Princeton; but, before he could reach that place, he received intelligence that Lord Cornwallis, who had been strongly reinforced, was now rapidly advancing from Brunswick, by different routes, so as to get in his rear. A retreat now again became indispensable, and it was absolutely necessary to pass the Delaware.

He crossed that river on the eighth of December, secured all the boats, broke down the bridges on the roads leading along the Jersey shore, and posted his army in such a manner as to guard, as well as was in his power, the different fording places over which it was practicable for the enemy to pass. As the rear guard crossed the river the van of the British army appeared in sight. Their main body took post at Trenton, and detachments were placed both above and below, so as to render entirely uncertain the place at which they might attempt to pass; while small parties, without any interruption from the people of the country, reconnoitred the Delaware for a considerable distance.

Some intelligence had been received, stating the enemy to have brought boats with them. Should this be the fact, the river was so completely passable, as to render it impracticable, without a force greatly exceeding that possessed by the American General, to prevent their crossing it. The course of

of the Delaware from Bordentown below Trenton, turns westward, and forms an acute angle with its course from Philadelphia to that place; so that the enemy might cross a considerable distance above, and be not much, if any further from the metropolis than the American army.

In consequence of this state of things, the General advised that lines of defence should be drawn from the Schuylkill about the Heights of Springatsbury, eastward to the Delaware, and General Putnam was ordered to superintend them; while General Mifflin, who had just returned to camp, was again dispatched to Philadelphia, to take charge of the numerous stores at that place.

The enemy made some ineffectual attempts, which were defeated by the vigilance of the Americans, to seize a number of boats guarded by Lord Stirling about Coryell's Ferry; and, in order to facilitate their movements down the river on the Jersey shore, they repaired the bridges three or four miles below Trenton, which had been broken up by order of General Washington; after which they marched a strong detachment to Bordentown, so as to create the impression that they intended to cross at the same time above and below, and either proceed in two columns directly to Philadelphia, or completely envelope the American army. To counteract this plan, and to avoid being enclosed in the angle of the river at Trenton, the gal-

lies

lies were stationed so as to give the earliest notice of any movements below, and, at the same time, afford their aid in repelling any effort to cross the river; while the American General made such a disposition of his little army as to guard against the execution of what he believed to be the enemy's real design, which was to ford the river above. Four brigades under the Generals, Lord Stirling, Mercer, Stephens, and de Fermoy, were posted from Yardly's up to Coryell's, in such manner as to guard every suspicious part of the river, and to assist each other in case of an attack. General Irvine, with the remnant of the flying camp of Pennsylvania, who were engaged to serve till the first of January, and some Jersey militia, under General Dickenson, were posted from Yardly's down to the ferry opposite to Bordentown. Colonel Cadwallader, the brother of the gentleman taken in Fort Washington, with the Pennsylvania militia, occupied the ground above and below the mouth of Nishameny River, as far down as Dunk's Ferry, at which place Colonel Nixon was posted with the third Philadelphia battalion. The artillery was apportioned among the brigades, and small redoubts were thrown up at every place where it was possible to ford the river. Precise orders were given to the commanding officer of each detachment, marking out, as nearly as possible, the conduct he should observe in the

events which might happen, directing his route in case of being driven from his post, and the passes he should endeavour to defend on his way to the high grounds of German Town, where the army was to rendezvous, if driven by the enemy from the river.

Having made this arrangement of his troops, he waited in the anxious hope of receiving reinforcements; and in the mean time, watched every motion of the enemy with the utmost vigilance, used all the means he could devise to obtain intelligence, and daily sent out parties over the river to harass the enemy, to make prisoners, and to observe their situation.

The utmost exertions were made by the civil authority to raise the militia. Expresses were sent through the different counties of Pennsylvania, and to the governments of Delaware and Maryland, urging them to march without delay to join the army. General Miflin was directed "to repair immediately to the neighbouring counties, and endeavour, by all the means in his power, to rouse and bring in the militia to the defence of Philadelphia." Congress also declared, "that they deemed it of great importance to the general safety, that General Miflin should make a progress through the several counties of the state of Pennsylvania, to rouse the freemen thereof to the immediate defence of the city and country:" and they resolved, "that the

the Assembly be requested to appoint a committee of their body to make the tour with him, and assist in this good and necessary work *."

In the hope that the militia might be prevailed on to furnish more effectual aid, so as to enable him even to act offensively, if they saw a large regular army to which they might attach themselves, the Commander in Chief had directed General Gates to march with the regulars from the northern army: and, in the confidence that, if any movements should be made by the enemy against the Highlands, the New England militia might be depended on to supply the places of the troops now stationed at those posts, General Heath was also ordered from Peckskill.

Although General Lee had been repeatedly urged, in the most pressing manner, to join the Commander in Chief, he proceeded slowly in the execution of these orders, manifesting a strong disposition to retain his separate command, and rather to hang on, and threaten the rear of the enemy, than strengthen the army in their front. With this view, he proposed establishing himself at Morristown; but, on receiving a letter from General Washington, stating his disapprobation of this plan,

* General Armstrong, of Pennsylvania, was at the same time sent, by General Washington, into that part of the state where he possessed most influence, to encourage the recruiting service, and favour the attempt of raising the militia.

which,

which, though proper in itself, under other circumstances, was now totally inadmissible, as the army, without this reinforcement, was not strong enough to stop the march of the enemy to Philadelphia, and pressing him to come on, he still declared an opinion in favour of his own proposition, and proceeded reluctantly towards the Delaware. While on this march through Morris county, and at the distance of about twenty miles from the enemy, he very indiscreetly quartered, under a slight guard, in a house about three miles from his army. Information of this circumstance was given by a countryman to Colonel Harcourt, at that time detached with a body of cavalry, for the purpose of gaining intelligence concerning his movements, who immediately formed and executed the design of seizing him. By a rapid march, this corps of cavalry, very early in the morning, reached the house where the General had lodged, who received no intimation of its approach till the house was surrounded, and he found himself a prisoner to Colonel Harcourt, who bore him off in triumph to the British army, where he was for some time treated, not as a prisoner of war, but as a deserter from the British service.

This misfortune made a very serious impression on all America. The confidence originally placed in General Lee, created by his experience and real talents, had been very greatly increased by the success which

which had attended him while commanding in the southern department. In addition to this, it was generally believed that his opinions, during the military operations in New York, had contributed to the adoption of those judicious movements which had, in a great measure, defeated the plans of the enemy in that quarter. It was also believed, but without any certain knowledge of the fact, that he had opposed the majority, in the council of war, which determined to maintain the Forts Washington and Lee. No officer, except the Commander in Chief, possessed at that time so large a portion of the confidence either of the army or of the country; and this loss was almost universally bewailed as the greatest calamity which had befallen the American arms. It was regretted by no person more than by General Washington himself, who highly esteemed his merit as a soldier, and sincerely lamented his captivity, both on account of his personal feelings, and of the public interest.

General Sullivan, on whom the command of that division of the army devolved, after the capture of Lee, promptly obeyed the orders which had been directed to that officer, and, crossing the Delaware at Philipsburg, joined the Commander in Chief about the twentieth, whose effective force was now increased to nearly seven thousand men. He was also joined on the same day by General Gates, with a part of the northern army.

All attempts of the British General to get possession of boats, for the purpose of transporting his army over the Delaware, having failed, he appeared to have determined to close the campaign, and to retire into winter quarters. About four thousand men were cantoned on the Delaware, at Trenton, Bordentown, the White Horse, and Burlington; and the remaining part of the army of Jersey was distributed from that river to the Hackensac. Strong corps were posted at Princeton, Brunswick, and Elizabeth Town; but General Washington apprehended that the intention of taking Philadelphia, in the course of the winter, was only postponed till the ice should become sufficiently firm to bear the army.

To intimidate as much as possible, and thereby impede the recruiting business, was believed to have been no inconsiderable inducement with General Howe for covering with his army so large a portion of Jersey. To counteract his views in this respect, was an object of real importance. For that purpose General Washington ordered three regiments, who were marching from Peckskill, to halt at Morristown, and to unite with about eight hundred Jersey militia, who had collected under Colonel Ford, at the same place. General Maxwell was detached to take the command of these troops, with orders to watch the motions of the enemy, and to endeavour to harass them in their marches; to give intelligence

telligence of all their movements, and especially of such as might be made from Brunswick towards Princeton or Trenton; to keep up the spirits of the militia, and, as much as possible, prevent the inhabitants from going within the British lines, making their submission, and taking protections.

The short interval between the enemy's going into winter quarters and the re-commencement of active operations, was employed by General Washington in repeating the representations he had so often made to Congress, respecting the army for the ensuing campaign. The extreme dangers resulting from short enlistments, and of relying on militia, had now been fully exemplified; and his remonstrances on that subject were supported by that severe experience which improves while it chastises. He had sensibly felt, in the course of the campaign, his want of cavalry, of artillery, and of engineers; he had before stated to Congress his ideas on these important subjects, and he now reurged them to that body. He was likewise earnest with them to increase the number of continental regiments. It was admitted, that those already voted would most probably not be completed; but he contended, that, by directing an additional number, and appointing other officers, more men would be enlisted, as every officer would recruit a few. With respect to the additional expense to be incurred by the measures he recommended, it was ob-

served, "that our funds were not the only object now to be taken into consideration. The enemy, it was found, were daily gathering strength from the disaffected. This strength, like a snow-ball, would increase by rolling, unless some means could be devised to check effectually the progress of their arms. Militia might possibly do it for a short time, but in a short time also the militia of those states which were frequently called upon, would not turn out at all, or would turn out with so much reluctance and sloth, as to amount to the same thing. Instance New Jersey! Witness Pennsylvania! Could any thing but the River Delaware have saved Philadelphia?"

"Could any thing," he asked, "be more destructive of the recruiting business, than giving ten dollars bounty for six weeks' service in the militia, who come in you cannot tell how, go you cannot tell when, and act you cannot tell where; who consume your provisions, exhaust your stores, and leave you at last in a critical moment?"

"These, Sir," he added, "are the men I am to depend upon ten days hence. This is the basis upon which your cause will rest, and must for ever depend, till you obtain a large standing army, sufficient of itself to oppose the enemy."

He also hinted the idea, extremely delicate in itself, of enlarging his powers, so as to enable him to act without constant applications to Congress for

their

their sanction of measures, the immediate adoption of which was essential to the public interests. "This might," he said, "be termed an application for powers too dangerous to be intrusted. He could only answer, that desperate diseases required desperate remedies. He could with truth declare, that he felt no lust of power, but wished, with as much fervency as any man upon this wide extended continent, for an opportunity of turning the sword into a ploughshare: but his feelings as an officer and as a man had been such, as to force him to say, that no person ever had a greater choice of difficulties to contend with than himself."

After stating several measures he had adopted, not within the powers conferred on him by Congress, and urging many other necessary arrangements, he added, "it may be thought I am going a good deal out of the line of my duty, to adopt these measures, or advise thus freely: a character to lose, an estate to forfeit, the inestimable blessings of liberty at stake, and a life devoted, must be my excuse."

The present aspect of their affairs was extremely unfavourable to the United States. The existing army, except a few regiments from Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New York, affording an effective force of about fifteen hundred men, was to be dissolved in a very few days. New Jersey had, in a great measure, submitted to the enemy. The militia of Pennsylvania had not turned out with the alacrity expected from them. General Howe would,

most probably, avail himself of the ice, which was now to be expected, and of the dissolution of the American army, to pass the Delaware and seize Philadelphia. This event was greatly dreaded, not only on account of its intrinsic importance at any time, but its peculiar importance at this juncture, when that army was to be recruited, on which the future hopes of America were to rest, and which was to decide her destiny. It was greatly feared, and with much reason, that this event would make so unfavourable an impression on the public mind, as to deter the American youth from engaging in a contest becoming so desperate.

Impelled by these considerations, and by that enterprising disposition which he possessed in a very great degree, General Washington no sooner perceived the dispersed situation of the enemy, than he meditated a blow which might retrieve the affairs of America in the public opinion, and recover the ground which had been lost.

He formed the daring plan of attacking at the same instant, all the British posts on the Delaware. If successful in all or any of these attacks, he hoped to wipe off the ill impressions made by his losses and by his retreat, and to compell the enemy to compress himself in such a manner as no longer to cover the Jerseys, while he should, at the same time, relieve Philadelphia from the immediate and imminent danger with which it was now threatened.

The position he had taken, to oppose the passage

of

of the river by the enemy, was precisely calculated to favour his present scheme of offensive operations.

Most of his regulars were posted above Trenton, from Yardly's up to Coryell's Ferry. General Irvine, with the Pennsylvania flying camp and Jersey militia, extended from Yardley's to the ferry opposite Bordentown; and General Cadwallader, with the Pennsylvania militia, lay still lower down the river.

The plan now formed was to cross in the night at M'Konkey's Ferry, about nine miles above Trenton, to march down in two divisions, the one taking the River Road, and the other the Pennington Road, both of which lead into the town; the one at the upper or west end, and the other at its back, and towards the north. This part of the plan was to be executed by the General in person, at the head of about two thousand four hundred continental troops. It was supposed very practicable to pass them over the river by twelve o'clock, so that sufficient time would be allowed to reach their point of destination by five in the morning of the next day, when the attack was to be made. General Irvine was directed to cross at the Trenton Ferry, and secure the bridge below the town, so as to prevent the escape of any part of the enemy by that road. General Cadwallader was to cross over at Bristol, and carry the post at Burlington. It had been in contemplation to unite the troops employ-

ed in fortifying Philadelphia, to those at Bristol, and to place the whole under General Putnam; but there were such indications in that city of an insurrection to favour the royal cause, that it was deemed unsafe to withdraw them. The cold on the night of the twenty-fifth was very severe; a mingled snow, hail, and rain, fell in great quantities, and so much ice was formed in the river, that, with the utmost possible exertions, the troops, with the artillery, could not be got over till three o'clock, and it was near four before the line of march could be taken up. As the distance to Trenton, both by the River and Pennington Roads, is nearly the same, it was supposed that each division of the army would reach its object about the same time, and therefore orders were given to attack at the first moment of arrival; and, after driving in the out-guards, to press rapidly after them into the town, so as to prevent the main body of the enemy from forming.

General Washington himself accompanied the upper division, and arrived at the out-post on that road precisely at eight o'clock. He immediately drove it in, and in three minutes heard the fire from the division which had taken the River Road. The piquet-guard kept up a fire from behind houses as they retreated, but the Americans followed them with such ardour and rapidity, that they could make no stand. Colonel Rawle, a very gallant officer, who commanded in Trenton, paraded

raded his men, in order to meet the assailants. In the very commencement of the action he was mortally wounded; and his troops, in apparent confusion, attempted to file off from the right, and gain the road to Princeton. Perceiving this, General Washington threw a detachment in their front, which intercepted them in the attempt, and advanced rapidly on them. Finding themselves surrounded, and their artillery already seized, they laid down their arms, and surrendered prisoners of war.

Unfortunately, the quantity of ice had rendered it impracticable for General Irvine to execute that part of the plan which had been allotted to him. With his utmost efforts he could not cross the river. In consequence of this circumstance, the lower road towards Bordentown remained open. A part of the enemy, about five hundred men, stationed in the lower end of Trenton, availed themselves of this circumstance, and, crossing the bridge in the commencement of the action, marched down the river to Bordentown. The same cause prevented General Cadwallader from attacking the post at Burlington. With infinite difficulty he got over a part of his infantry; but, finding it absolutely impracticable to cross with the artillery, his infantry returned.

Though this plan failed in so many of its parts, in consequence of the extreme severity of the night,

night, the success which attended that part of it executed by General Washington in person, was complete, and was followed by the happiest effects. About twenty of the enemy were killed, and nine hundred and nine, including officers, laid down their arms, and surrendered themselves prisoners. Others were afterwards found concealed in houses, so as to increase the number to about one thousand. Six field-pieces and a thousand stand of small arms were also taken. On the part of the Americans, two privates were killed, two frozen to death, and one officer and three or four privates wounded.

Had it been practicable for the divisions under Generals Irvine and Cadwallader to have crossed the river, it was intended to have proceeded from Trenton to the posts below, at and about Bordentown; to have entirely swept the enemy from the banks of the Delaware, and to have maintained a position in the Jerseys. But finding those parts of the plan to have entirely failed, and supposing the enemy to remain in force below, while a strong corps was posted at Princeton, it was thought unadvisable to hazard the loss of the very important advantage already gained, by attempting to increase it; and General Washington re-crossed the river, with his prisoners and the military stores he had taken. Lieutenant Colonel Baylor, his aid-de-camp, who carried the intelligence of this success

cess to Congress, was presented with a horse, completely caparisoned for service, and recommended to be appointed to the command of a regiment of cavalry.

Nothing could surpass the astonishment of the enemy at this unexpected display of vigour on the part of the American General. His condition, and that of his country, had been thought desperate. He had been deserted by all the troops having a legal right to leave him. The regiments ordered from Ticonderoga had melted away, on returning to the neighbourhood of the country in which they had been raised; and of his remaining regulars, nearly two-thirds would be entitled to their discharge on the first day of January. There appeared no probability of prevailing on them to continue longer in the service, and the recruiting business was absolutely at an end. The spirits of a large proportion of the people were sunk to the lowest point of depression. New Jersey appeared to be completely subdued, and some of the best judges of the public sentiment were of opinion, that immense numbers in Pennsylvania also were determined not to permit the sixty days, allowed in the proclamation of Lord and Sir William Howe, to elapse, without availing themselves of the pardon it held forth to them. Instead of offensive operations, the total dispersion of the small remnant of the American army might well be looked

for, since it would be rendered too feeble, by the discharge of those engaged only till the last day of December, to attempt any longer a defence of the Delaware; which would, by that time, in all probability be every where passable on the ice. While every appearance supported these opinions, and the British General, without being sanguine, might well have considered the war as approaching its termination, this bold and fortunate enterprise announced to him, that he had to contend with an adversary who could never cease to be formidable, so long as the possibility of resistance remained. Finding the conquest of America further removed than had been supposed, he determined, though in the depth of winter, to recommence active operations; and Lord Cornwallis, who had retired to New York, for the purpose of embarking for Europe, suspended his departure, and returned to the Jerseys in great force, for the purpose of regaining the ground that had been lost.

Meanwhile, Count Donop, who commanded the troops now posted below Trenton, and was himself at Burlington, on hearing the disaster which had befallen Colonel Rawle, immediately commenced his retreat by the road leading to Amboy, and joined General Leslie at Princeton. The next day General Cadwallader crossed over and took post on the Jersey shore. He was ordered to harass the enemy if he could do so safely, but to

put nothing to the hazard till he should be joined by the continental battalions, who were allowed a day or two of repose, after the fatigues of the enterprise against Trenton. General Mifflin now joined General Irvine, with a detachment of Pennsylvania militia, amounting to about fifteen hundred men; and those troops were also ordered to cross the Delaware.

The General once more finding himself at the head of a force with which it was practicable to attempt something, resolved not to remain inactive. Inferior as he was to the enemy, he yet determined to employ the winter, in endeavouring to recover the whole, or a great part of Jersey.

With this view, he ordered General Heath, who was stationed at Peckskill for the defence of the Highlands, on the North River, to leave a small detachment of troops at that place, and with the main body of New England militia to move into Jersey, and approach the cantonments of the enemy on that side. General Maxwell was ordered to collect as many militia as possible, to harass their flank and rear, and to attack their out-posts, when any favourable occasion should present itself. Having made these dispositions, he again crossed the Delaware, himself, with his continental regiments, and once more took post at Trenton. Here he exerted all his influence to prevail on the troops from New England, whose terms of service expired

expired on the last day of December, to continue during the present exigency; and with infinite difficulty, added to a bounty of ten dollars, many of them were induced to re-engage for six weeks.

The enemy were now collected in force at Princeton, under Lord Cornwallis, where some works were thrown up; and, from their advancing a strong corps towards Trenton, as well as from their knowledge that the continental troops from New England were now entitled to be discharged, and from some private intelligence, it was expected they would attack that place.

Generals Miflin and Cadwallader, who lay at Bordentown and Croswix, with three thousand six hundred militia, were ordered to march up in the night of the first of January, to join the Commander in Chief, whose whole effective force, with this addition, did not exceed five thousand men.

As had been expected, the enemy advanced upon them the next morning, and, after some slight skirmishing, with troops detached to Maidenhead to harass and delay their march, the van of their army reached Trenton about four o'clock in the afternoon; while their rear was at Maidenhead, about half way between Princeton and Trenton. On their approach, General Washington retired across the Assumpinck, a creek which runs through the town, behind which he drew up his army. The enemy attempted to cross this creek at several places,

places, but finding all the fords guarded, they halted, and kindled their fires. The American troops kindled their fires, likewise, and a cannonade, which had commenced on their first appearance, was kept up on both sides till dark.

The situation of General Washington was now again extremely critical. If he maintained his present position, it was certain that he should be attacked, next morning, by a force in all respects superior to his own; and the result would most probably be, the destruction of his little army. If he should retreat over the Delaware, the passage of that river was now so difficult, being filled with ice, which, in consequence of a few mild and foggy days, was not firm enough to march upon, that a considerable loss, perhaps a total defeat, would be sustained; and, in any event, the Jerseys would once more be entirely in possession of the enemy; the public mind would again be depressed, and recruiting discouraged, by his apparent inferiority; and Philadelphia would once more be in the grasp of General Howe. It was obvious that the one event or the other would deduct very greatly from the advantages promised from his late success; and, if it did not render the American cause absolutely desperate, would very essentially injure it.

In this state of things, he formed the bold and judicious design of abandoning the Delaware, and marching

marching silently in the night, by a circuitous route, along the left flank of the enemy, into their rear at Princeton, where he knew they could not be very strong. After beating them there, it was his intention to make a rapid movement to Brunswick, where their baggage and principal magazines lay under a weak guard. He had sanguine expectations that this manœuvre would call the attention of the British General to his own defence, in which event, very great objects would be accomplished; Philadelphia would be saved for the present; great part of Jersey recovered; and not only the appearance of a retreat avoided, but the public mind encouraged by active and offensive operations. If he should even be disappointed in this expectation, and, contrary to every calculation, Lord Cornwallis should proceed to Philadelphia, nothing worse could happen, in that quarter, than must happen should the American army be driven before him; and, in the mean time, he would lessen that calamity, by expelling the enemy completely from Jersey, and cutting up all their parties in that state by detail.

The council of war approved the plan, and preparations were immediately made for its execution. The baggage, as soon as it was dark, was removed silently to Burlington; and about one o'clock, after renewing their fires, and leaving their guards, at the bridge and other passes over the creek which

which runs through Trenton, to go the rounds as usual, they decamped with perfect secresy, and took a circuitous route through Allen's Town to Princeton. At the latter place, three British regiments had encamped the preceding night, two of which commenced their march early in the morning, to join the rear of their army at Maidenhead. About sun-rise * they fell in with the van of the Americans, conducted by General Mercer, and a very sharp action ensued, which, however, was not of long duration. The militia, of which the advanced party was principally composed, soon gave way, and the few regulars attached to them were not strong enough to maintain their ground. General Mercer was mortally wounded, while gallantly exerting himself to rally his broken troops, and the van was entirely routed. But the fortune of the day was soon changed. The main body of the army, led by General Washington in person, followed close in the rear, and attacked the enemy with great spirit. Persuaded that defeat would irretrievably ruin the affairs of America, he advanced in the very front of danger, and exposed himself to the hottest fire of the enemy. He was

* The march of the enemy had been rendered much more expeditious than it could otherwise have been, by a fortunate change of weather. On the evening of the second, it became excessively cold, and the roads, which had become soft, were rendered as hard as pavement.

also well supported by the same troops who had, a few days before, saved their country at Trenton; so that the British, in turn, were compelled to give way. Their line was broken, and the two regiments separated from each other. Colonel Mawhood, who commanded that in front, forced his way through a part of the American troops, and reached Maidenhead. The fifty-fifth regiment, which was in the rear, retreated, by the way of Hillsborough, to Brunswick. The vicinity of the British forces at Maidenhead secured Colonel Mawhood from being pursued, and General Washington pressed forward to Princeton. The regiment remaining in that place saved itself, without having sustained much loss, by a precipitate retreat to Brunswick.

In this action, upwards of one hundred of the enemy were killed on the spot, and nearly three hundred wereta ken prisoners. The loss of the Americans, in killed, was somewhat less, but in this number was included General Mercer, a very valuable officer, from Virginia, who had served with the Commander in Chief in the war against the French and Indians, which terminated in 1763, and was greatly esteemed by him. Colonels Haslett and Potter, two brave and excellent officers, from Delaware and Pennsylvania; Captain Neal, of the artillery; Captain Fleming, who on that day commanded the seventh Virginia regiment; and

and five other valuable officers; were also among the slain.

On the appearance of day light, Lord Cornwallis discovered that the American army had moved off in the night, and immediately conceived the whole plan which had been formed by Washington. He was under extreme apprehensions for Brunswick, where magazines of great value had been collected, and where, it has been understood, the military chest, containing about seventy thousand pounds, was deposited. Breaking up his camp, he commenced a rapid march to that place, for the purpose of affording it protection; and was close in the rear of the American army, before it could leave Princeton.

General Washington now again found himself in a very perilous situation. His small army was exhausted with extreme fatigue. His troops had been without sleep, all of them one night, and some of them two. They were without blankets; many of them bare-footed, and otherwise very thinly clad. He was closely pursued by an enemy very much superior in point of numbers, well clothed, not harassed by loss of sleep, and who must necessarily come up with him before he could accomplish his designs on Brunswick, if any opposition should there be made to him. Under these circumstances, he very wisely determined to abandon the remaining part of his original plan; and, having

ing broken down the bridges over Millstone Creek, between Princeton and Brunswick, he took the road leading up the country to Pluckemin, where his army were permitted to refresh themselves, and to take that rest which they so greatly required. Lord Cornwallis continued his march to Brunswick, which he reached in the course of that night. General Mathews, who commanded at that place, had been greatly alarmed; and, while he paraded his troops for defence againt the American General, whom he expected, he also used the utmost industry in guarding against the worst, by removing the military stores to a place of greater safety.

The sufferings of the American army had been so great, from the severity of the season, and the very active service in which they had been engaged; their complaints, especially on the part of the militia, were so loud; their numbers were reducing so fast, by returning home, and by sickness; that General Washington found it impracticable, immediately to prosecute further offensive operations, and deemed it absolutely necessary to retire to Morristown, in order to put his men under cover, and to give them some repose.

The bold, judicious, and unexpected attacks made at Trenton and Princeton, by an enemy believed to be vanquished, had an influence on the fate of the war much more extensive in its consequences than, from a mere estimate of the killed

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and taken, would be supposed. They saved Philadelphia for the present winter; they recovered the state of Jersey; and, which was of still more importance, they revived the drooping spirits of America, and gave a sensible impulse to the recruiting service throughout the United States.

The problem, whether a nation can be defended against a permanent force by temporary armies; by occasional calls of the husbandman from his plough to the field, was already solved: and in its demonstration, the independence of America had nearly perished in its cradle. All eyes were now turned on the army to be created for the ensuing campaign, as the only solid basis on which the hopes of the patriot could rest. During the retreat through the Jerseys, and while the expectation prevailed, that no effectual resistance could be made to the advance of the enemy, some spirited men, indeed, were only animated to greater and more determined exertions; but such was not the operation of this state of things on the great mass from whence is to be drawn the solid force of armies. There appeared, especially in the middle states, the pause of distrust. Doubts, concerning the issue of the contest, became more extensive; and the business of recruiting proceeded so heavily and slowly, as to excite the most anxious solicitude for the future.

The affairs of Trenton and Princeton were represented

presented and considered as great victories. They were believed, by the body of the people, to evidence the superiority of their army and of their General. The opinion that they were engaged in a hopeless contest, yielded to a confidence, that proper exertions on their part would be crowned with ultimate success.

This change of opinion, relative to the issue of the war, was accompanied with an essential change in their conduct; and, although the regiments required by Congress were not completed, they were made much stronger than, before this happy revolution in the aspect of public affairs, was believed to have been possible.

The firmness manifested by Congress throughout the gloomy and trying period which intervened between the loss of Fort Washington and the battle of Princeton, entitles the members of that day to the admiration of the world, and the gratitude of their fellow-citizens. Unawed by the dangers which threatened them, and regardless of personal safety, they did not, for an instant, admit the idea, that the independence they had declared was to be surrendered, and peace to be purchased by returning to their antient colonial situation. As the progress of the British army through Jersey, and the consequent insecurity of Philadelphia, rendered an adjournment of Congress, from that place to one further removed from the seat of war, a necessary

cessary measure of precaution, their exertions seemed to increase with their difficulties. They sought to remove the despondence which was seizing and paralysing the public mind, by an address to the states, in which every argument was suggested that could rouse them to vigorous action. They likewise made the most strenuous efforts to animate the militia, and impel them to the field, by the agency of those whose popular eloquence * best fitted them for such a service.

When re-assembled at Baltimore, the place to which they had adjourned, their resolutions exhibited no evidences of confusion or dismay; and the most judicious efforts were made, by collecting, as soon as possible, a respectable military force, to repair the mischief produced by past errors.

Declaring, that, in the present situation of things, the very existence of civil liberty depended on the right execution of military powers, to a vigorous direction of which, distant, numerous, and deliberative bodies, were entirely unequal; they authorized General Washington to raise sixteen additional regiments, and conferred upon him, for six months, powers for the conduct of the war, which were almost unlimited.

When reduced to their lowest ebb, towards the close of 1776, while the tide of fortune was run-

* General Miflin was, on this occasion, particularly useful.

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ning strongest against them, some few members, distrusting their ability to make a successful resistance, proposed to authorise Commissioners, deputed to the Court of Versailles, to transfer to that country the same monopoly of their trade which Great Britain had hitherto enjoyed. This proposition is stated to have been relinquished, because it was believed that concessions of this kind would destroy the force of many arguments which had been used in favour of independence, and probably disunite the people. It was next proposed to offer a monopoly of certain enumerated articles of produce: to this, the clashing interests of the different states were so directly opposed, that it received a speedy and decided negative. Some proposed offering to France a league offensive and defensive; but this also was rejected. The more enlightened members of Congress argued, that, though the friendship of small states might be purchased, that of France could not. They alleged, that if she would risk a war with Great Britain, by openly espousing their cause, it would not be so much from the prospect of direct advantages, as from a natural desire to lessen the overgrown power of a dangerous rival. It was therefore supposed, that the only inducement likely to influence France to an interference, was an assurance that the United States were determined to persevere in refusing to return to their former allegiance. Under the influence

fluence of this better opinion, resolutions were again entered into, declaratory of their determination to listen to no terms founded on the idea of their resuming the character of British subjects, but trusting the event to Providence, and risking all consequences; to adhere to the independence they had declared, and the freedom of trade they had proffered to all nations. Copies of these resolutions were sent to the principal courts of Europe; and proper persons were appointed to solicit their friendship to the new-formed states. These dispatches fell into the hands of the British, and by them were published—a circumstance by no means unwished for by Congress, who were persuaded, that an apprehension of their making up all differences with Great Britain was a principal objection to the interference of foreign courts, in what was represented to be no more than a domestic quarrel. A resolution, adopted in the deepest distress, and in the worst of times, that Congress would listen to no terms of re-union with the parent state, would, it was believed, convince those who wished for the dismemberment of the British Empire, that it was sound policy to interfere so far as would prevent the conquest of the United States.

END OF VOL. II.

It is supposed that the Manuscript of another Volume of this Work will be received from America in the course of the Autumn, and that the entire Work will be completed, in Four or Five Volumes, before Christmas.

The Figure on Horseback in the Frontispiece is a characteristic Portrait of Washington, taking his usual morning ride, accompanied by his servant and his favourite Newfoundland dog.

No. 71, St. Paul's Church-Yard,
August 1, 1801.

Printed by J. Adlard, Duke-street, Smithfield, and J. Cuthell, Strand

00036670

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 January, 2016